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Critical reflections on theories of revolution: A lesson from Iran

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The University of Texas at Austin, 1987

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**CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THEORIES OF REVOLUTION:
A LESSON FROM IRAN**

by

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DISSERTATION

**Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
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CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THEORIES OF REVOLUTION:
A LESSON FROM IRAN

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**To the politically conscious forces
of
Iran and Nicaragua**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction:	
Theoretical Framework	1
The Conceptual Analysis of Revolution	16
Part One: General Theories of Revolution and the Iranian Case	
I J-Curve Analysis	40
II The Relative Deprivation Model	69
III The Structural Functionalist Approach	94
IV The Political Conflict Model	117
Part Two: The World Historical Context Approach	
V-1 Introduction: Perspectives on State-Centered Theory	143
V-2 Skocpolean Theory of Revolution	149
V-3 Skocpol's Theory and the Iranian Revolution	153
Part Three: Radical Theories of Revolution and the Iranian Experience	
VI-1 What is Meant by Critical Political Thought?	181
VI-2 Marxian Theory of Revolution	183
VI-3 Marxism and the Iranian Revolution	191
VI-4 Marxist Thought and Dynamics of Radical Social Change	218
Part Four: Conclusion:	
VII-1 An Evaluation of the Theories of Revolution	251
VII-2 Toward a General Theoretical Perspective	266
VII-3 Summary	290
BIBLIOGRAPHY	301

INTRODUCTION: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is motivated by a desire to make a contribution to critical social scientific thinking. It is designed to promote analytically critical thoughts about a fundamental social issue: revolution. The main purpose, therefore, is to present a critical analysis of existing general theories of revolution. This will be done in part by relying upon empirical materials drawn from the experience of the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979 in order to test their validity, applicability, and explanatory power. The first proposition of this study is that the general theories of revolution are conceptually and theoretically inadequate when measured against the experience of the Iranian Revolution. The relevant theoretical approaches include aggregate-psychological theories, structural-functionalist approaches, and political conflict formulations.

The underlying assumption of the psychological approach is that relative deprivation and rising expectations lead to revolution. According to the practitioners of this approach, once discontent, grievances, and feelings of tension develop in the hearts and minds of individuals, they inevitably result in collective violence.¹ This approach reflects two major problems: (1) it assumes that there is an automatic relationship between a hypothetical state of mind and the happening of violence; and (2) it does not distinguish between revolution and violence.² The psychological approach seeks the causes of revolution in a state of disorder associated with personal psychic tendencies. Actually, this sort of reasoning is very mechanical and cannot be confirmed by empirical analysis. For instance, how

can the state of mind be measured? When can we say that the mind is saturated with tensions and hence is ready to explode into political action? Even if mind A is intensified by the severity of the strain-activating factors and is ready to launch a violent attack on the frustrating agents, mind B's frustration may not be tantamount to mind A's; and thus its capacity to participate in political violence seems to be limited, or at least B is not as frustrated as is A. Therefore, it is logical to argue that all people may not suffer equally from sociopolitical and economic deprivation. Frustrated individuals may embark upon violent action, but violent behavior cannot be defined as revolution. This is a serious problem with the psychological approach. Moreover, the basic concepts of this approach cannot be empirically validated.

The functionalist approach finds the causes of revolution in a state of disequilibrium.³ In fact, this approach to revolutionary change explains very little. The concepts employed by this model do not stand up to empirical confirmation, and, based on historical experience, systems seldom exist in equilibrium.⁴ The premise, however, is that this approach fails to make a distinction between cause and effect; that is to say, it does not explain the process of a radical and fundamental revolutionary structural transformation of prevailing negative realities. This is basically because the social reality of the capitalist system is contradictory; the parts of a whole do not operate in an orderly manner. In reality, contradictions are central to capitalism, which constitutes the structurally antagonistic relationship that makes social class interaction. And antagonism in a politically conscious socioclass relation can be resolved only through political action.⁵

According to functionalism, the whole is a given concept. It is free from any contradiction. It is a universally accepted truth. Hence, it is always accurate, and no one has a right to question the existing prevalent oppressive structures. The theoreticians of this school of thought do not, in fact, ask why the whole exists, how it has come into being, or in whose best interest it functions. They accept the system as it stands, never questioning its social structure, its alienating negative character. If they try to understand the whole, it is only for the purpose of reforming its malfunctioning parts. The problem is that without an attempt to analyze the system, its parts cannot be comprehended. Seen in this light, functionalist theory is empirically wrong and theoretically inadequate to explain revolutionary social change.⁶

In Charles Tilly's opinion,⁷ psychological approaches and structural functionalism fail to see political violence as a result of political conflict among mobilized groups and governments. Because the aforementioned approaches link sociopolitical problems to the process of modernization, they fail to incorporate political factors into the framework of their analysis. For instance, they do not see that modernization from above involves inherent contradictions. For one thing it leads to uneven development and underdevelopment in the society. Hence, there emerges a gap between social mobilization and political development. Here mass legitimization, which involves affirmation by participation, plays a critical role. But anachronistic systems, for the purpose of self-preservation, often stifle participation and restrict the expansion and distribution of power. They are thus incapable of absorbing the forces unleashed by social change. This results in the alienation and

politicization of the deprived forces. The society is then cut off from the politically active forces, which are now in direct conflict with the system. The fact is, one cannot reform old structures fundamentally. Hence, the attempt to perpetuate these structures on the one hand and implement an all-embracing change on the other is a political contradiction. Psychological approaches and structural functionalism tend to ignore the political dimension of social conflict.

As a political conflict theorist, Tilly sees revolution as a form of conflict between competing groups in society. When conflict reaches its peak and political measures fail to mediate effectively among the various contenders, revolution takes place. The key defining factor in this approach is the development of "multiple sovereignty." In reality, the critical variables of this approach, which include the degree of intensity of group conflict and the resources available to competing groups, are closely associated with violence, but not necessarily with revolution. In fact, this approach also falls into the same trap as do the psychological and functionalist approaches. Therefore, all of them end up with an explanation of violence rather than of revolutionary change.

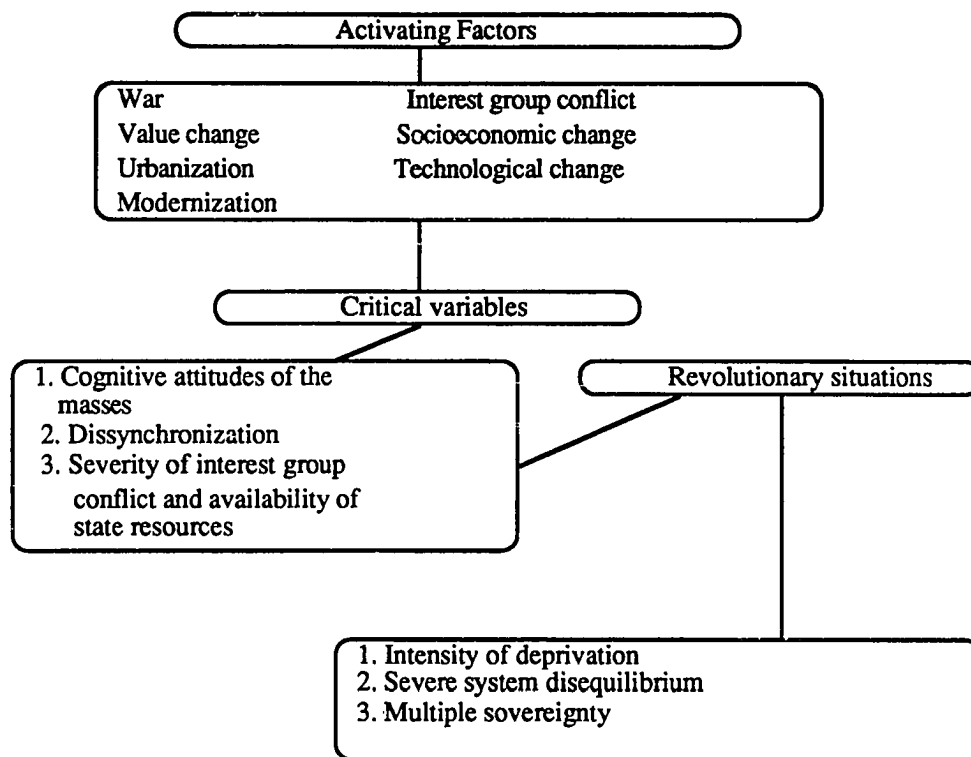
In sum, general theories of revolution suffer from a variety of weaknesses. Activating factors (socioeconomic change, modernization, technological change, interest group conflict, and so on) are very vaguely expressed concepts. It seems that any type of social change, be it cultural, economic, or technological, can lead to the outbreak of a revolution.

According to these theories, in the view of Harry Eckstein, it follows that revolutions may take place at any time in societies experiencing rapid social

change.⁸ But, empirically speaking, revolutions have been very rare. Again, as we know, rapid and massive changes have been "endemic" to the Western world. Thus, if these theories hold, the European continent in general, and Japan in particular, would have exploded in revolution.⁹

Furthermore, it is very difficult to isolate and measure the critical variables in these theoretical approaches. For example, what is meant by "cognitive attitudes of the masses, dissynchronization, or stresses and strains, imbalances and 'severity' of interest group conflict"?¹⁰ How can such factors be observed and measured? And if it is not possible to measure these variables, how is it possible to link them to a revolutionary situation? Moreover, how can one label them as critically determining factors in a revolutionary movement? It is in the light of these serious and debilitating problems that it is claimed that current theories of revolution have extremely limited explanatory power. Part One of this research thus attempts to substantiate this analysis and to demonstrate the proposition concerning the inadequacy of these theoretical approaches. The analysis of these aforementioned theories of revolution can be summed up as follows:

Figure 1. Theories of Revolution



Source: "Theories of Revolution: The Third Generation." Modified: after World Politics 32, no. 3 (April 1980):425-453.

According to these approaches, activating factors give way to the creation of critical variables, which, in turn, culminate in revolution.

Part Two presents a conceptually elaborated and history-bound alternative theory called the world historical context model. The second hypothesis here is that this formulation, when placed in a historical comparative perspective, is

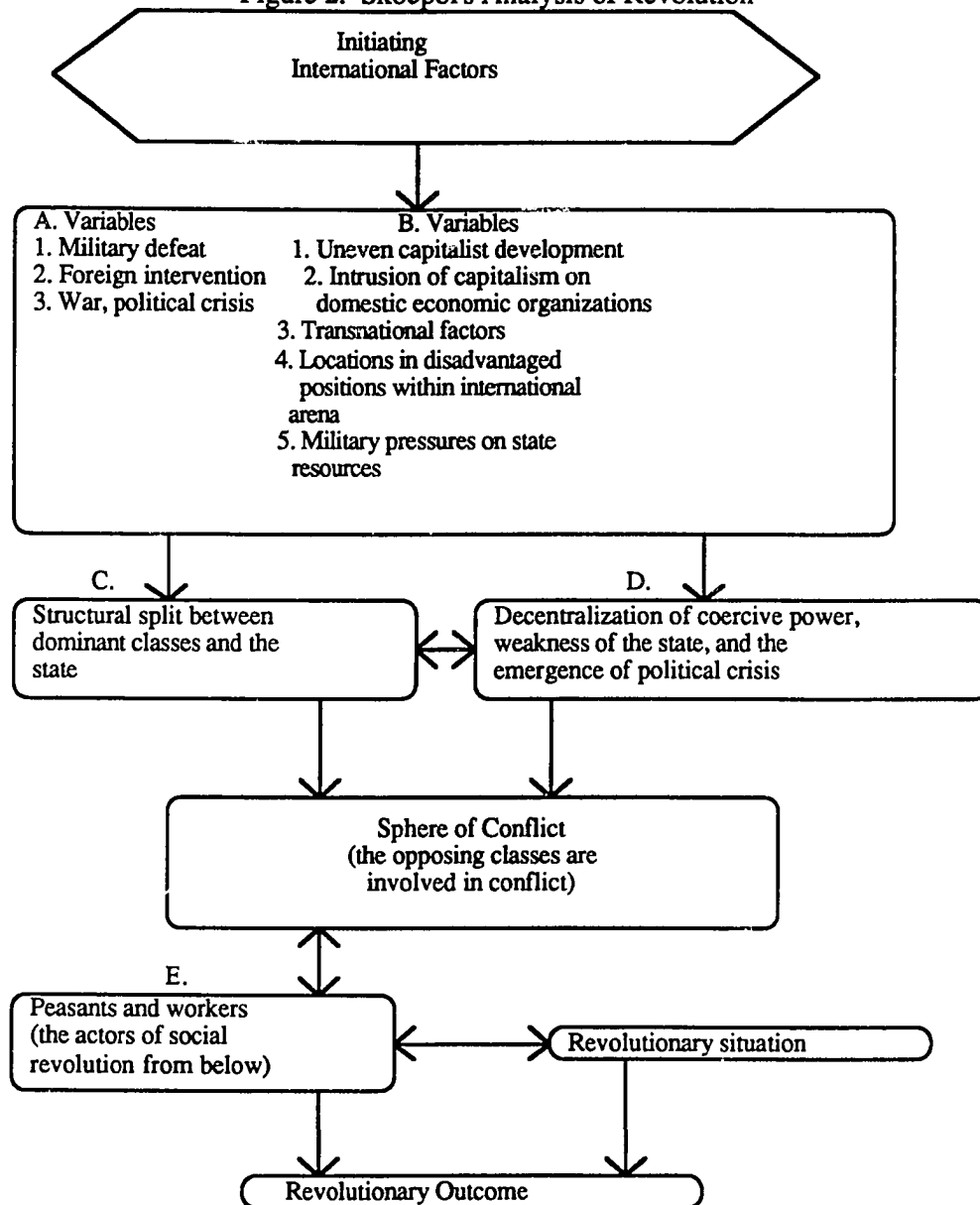
superior to the general theories of revolution. Yet, despite its improvement over these theories, it too fails to explain the phenomenon of the Iranian Revolution. This approach emphasizes Theda Skocpol's formulation.¹¹ Many scholars, for example, Wolf, Moore, and Paige, have argued that social change, especially revolution, is initiated by pressures from the international environment. Yet, they do not formulate theories of revolution per se, though they make important and insightful contributions to theory building in their emphasis upon external factors. Their ideas will be introduced whenever the occasion arises.

The Skocpolean theoretical formulation is indeed rich in content. It emphasizes the significance of international factors such as the intrusion of the capitalist market on the domestic economy, class relations, power constellations, and social forces, factors which are often ignored by many approaches to the study of revolution. Moreover, this approach is more historically centered and seeks not only to explain why revolutions occur but also to account for their outcomes. Because Skocpol, contrary to Wolf, Moore, Paige et al., develops a theory of revolution, the analysis in this context will mainly center on her theoretical insights.

Skocpol's thesis is that it is impossible for a revolution to occur as long as the repressive forces of the state organizations of the prerevolutionary regimes are in firm control of the situation. Thus, the most basic precondition for the outbreak of a revolution is weakened state power and a breakdown in the internal forces of domination. Her theory as applied to an explanation of the French, Russian, and Chinese social revolutions can, in fact, be empirically validated. Yet, notwithstanding the theoretical merits of this approach, I intend to demonstrate, in

Chapter V-2, that the Iranian Revolution is not consistent with her theoretical formulation. The Skocpolean analytical formulation is diagrammatically presented below:

Figure 2. Skocpol's Analysis of Revolution



Source: Derived from Skocpol's Analysis of States and Social Revolution.

The third proposition states that radical theories of revolution, defined as the Marxian theory of revolution and Marxist political thought, even though compatible with the political problems of Third World formations, better explain revolutionary situations in general, but when applied to the Iranian experience, they also suffer from certain weaknesses. Where the religious and cultural dimensions of the Iranian Revolution are concerned, all three categories fall short. Radical theories, compared to the aforementioned theories, have greater explanatory ability in informing revolutionary praxis and in explaining the eruptions of fundamental revolutionary change from below. These theories constitute a protest against lack of freedom, conditions of alienation, reification, domination, and exploitation. They perceive these factors as potentially destructive contradictions within the social system. These formulations, as opposed to the first four approaches, which appear to be impotent in practice, are politically practice-centered. Anything that is ineffectual in practice is not a theory of revolution at all.

Here the basic assumption concerning the Marxian theory of revolution is that this formulation was developed to explain revolutions as they were to occur in economically advanced capitalistic formations. The social revolutions that have taken place, and while they have taken the form of class-bound struggles developing out of objective structural contradictions within inherently conflict-centered societies in a historical process, they have not been in conformity with Marx's theoretical formulations. From the French Revolution on, they have occurred basically in societies where the agrarian mode of production prevailed.¹²

Marxian political thought, however, does have great appeal in Third World situations because of contradictions, tensions, and the exploitative social relations created by capitalistic development. And more importantly, the Marxist-inspired political movements in the peripheries tend not to be a deviation from historical development. Marxism, as a radical mode of thought, in fact, contains politically defining variables that have proved to be relevant to Third World formations in their struggle against domination.¹³ Marxisms emphasis on class struggle as the major force of history has led to the formulation of a radical political thought which advocates the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, provides for distribution to each according to work, and supports progressive realization of social justice, equality, and political freedom from the bondage of domination and exploitation. Hence, it is not surprising to see why it commands the attention of the largest audience, that is, the poor and disinherited class in the impoverished Third World formations.

In spite of this, Marxism falls short when attempting to explain revolutionary upheaval in contexts such as the Middle East for the following reasons. Leftist tendencies have been tightly controlled and repressed. Perhaps no other idea has been so forcefully suppressed, abused, and misused as has Marxism. Regressive attachment to diehard norms and values, old kinship ties, clientelism, and tribalism are other factors which have obstructed the development of Marxism as a prevailing force. Vulgarization of Marxism by associating it with Stalinism is yet another factor which tends to cripple Marxism in its application to these formations. More importantly, the impenetrability of Islam, especially the Shi'i

variant, with its claim to political power and its futuristic vision, to Marxism, constitutes insurmountable impediments that tend to limit Marxism's applicability to the Middle East.

But it should be emphasized that these formidable obstacles in the face of aggravating political and socioeconomic contradictions, dogmatism, forceful dictatorial absolutism, and imperial domination of the region can hardly weaken the relevancy of Marxism to this conflict-ridden part of the world.¹⁴ Note that this was the reverse of what Marx himself predicted. Thus the concept of "relevancy" does not refute our proposition that Marxian analysis is, if applied to Iran, because of the radicalism of Shi'i thought, confronted with theoretical inconsistency. Nonetheless, the Marxian notion of class relations rooted in the relationship between producers and nonproducers is an important theoretical tool for identifying and analyzing contradictions in society. It is a universally accepted fact that producers do not own production nor do they have any control even over the direction of production. They are thus alienated from the product of their hands. What is more, they owe rather than own, basically because the surplus value created by this class is expropriated by the capitalist class who owns the means of production and the wealth produced by the laborers. And this set of class relations indeed constitutes a potential source of sociopolitical conflict, and antagonistic class relations and class struggle can account for revolutionary social transformation. This analytical tool, that is, the concept of class, therefore, will be retained.

Since Marxian followers of Marxist political thought attempt to provide justification for the failure of Marxian theory to explain the occurrence of a social

revolution within advanced capitalist societies, the analysis of their political vision may be appropriate. Hence the last portion of the section on the Marxian theory of revolution explains the integration of Iran into the world capitalist system. It is intended to analyze how Western penetration, or imperialism, inhibits, promotes, and determines the course of sociopolitical and economic development.

According to the Marxist school of thought, the basic motive of capitalism is the maximization of profit. In order to achieve this goal and to resolve its inherent internal contradictions, it must inevitably expand. In short, it must internationalize itself. It is a mode of production which creates inequality on a large scale. This process of uneven development means rapid growth in some sectors and stagnation in others. Within this school, however, there are two contending theories: one in favor of the promotion thesis, and the other in favor of the inhibition or hindrance thesis. The former approach maintains that the expansion of capital to peripheries leads to the development of capitalism in those areas.¹⁵ (This approach is supported by Lenin and Luxemburg.) This thesis is challenged by the advocates of inhibition theory, which views imperialism as an impediment to development. The conviction of this school of thought is that underdevelopment is closely associated with imperialism. In other words, development cannot take place under imperialistic expansionism (Mao Tse-Tung). This thesis is further developed and expanded by the Monthly Review School (Paul Baran, Paul Sweezy, Harry Magdoff, Samir Amin, Andre' Gunder Frank, and others).¹⁶ According to these theorists, the accumulation of capital on the world level means the acceleration of development and growth in the advanced capitalist countries and stagnation of

capital development or its hindrance in the Third World formations -- a view which stands in sharp contradiction to the formulations of Marx, Lenin, and Luxemburg.

Actually, an argument can be made in favor of the inhibition thesis that capital accumulation inhibits the development of capitalism in the Third World formations, for free and independent national development under the political and economic hegemony of imperialism is no more than wishful thinking. This is simply because the system of capitalism is obviously in need of a noncapitalist market, cheap raw materials, low-cost labor, and so on. The accumulation of capital in the advanced industrialized capitalistic formations can be better realized by maintaining these factors in their control. Nonetheless, this does not necessarily mean that no industrialization or development occurs under imperial/capital domination. Our proposition, however, is that the inhibition thesis does not, at least in the Iranian case, hold up. The Iranian economy, in fact, since 1960 and as a result of capitalist development (though in Iran it was not internally rooted but was the consequence of capitalist penetration from without), has experienced changes but certainly not basic transformations.

The reader should not conclude from this analysis that an imperialism/progress equation is being drawn. What is being argued is that capitalistic expansion within Iran led to the mobilization of capital in the form of uneven development. This form of development, of course, directly emanates from the inherent contradictions of advanced capitalism. This is simply because capitalism cannot accept a fully developed "rival" in the periphery.¹⁷ Its expansion

to other countries with a noncapitalist, consumptionistic market provides a solution to its contradictions. Yet their solution itself becomes a major problem.

In the conclusion, the theories examined will be critically evaluated. The revealed defects may then persuade the reader to see why a new formulation is needed within the discipline of critical thought. Since a scientific study is bound to preserve the creative aspects of a thesis, though more from antithesis than thesis, I shall attempt to incorporate those critically defining variables into the frame of this new perspective. This synthesis, therefore, is not going to be a pure construct, but an amalgamated formulation. Deriving its raw materials from the laboratory of the Iranian experience, it will show how a theory of revolution should look. Thus, following the evaluation of the theories under consideration, in the concluding chapter, a prospect is drawn which will, it is hoped, explain social and political transformation in general and Iranian Revolution in particular. This formulation is motivated by a desire to introduce new categories and critical variables derived from the author's research which will assist social scientists in taking one further step along the long road to understanding fundamental revolutionary change.

In order to approach this formidable task, it is first necessary to embark upon a conceptual analysis of revolution. In this context, the theoretical problems concerning the very definition of revolution must be explored. This is very important, since the study of revolution suffers at the outset from severe definitional problems. In order to address this issue, the problems associated with the definitions of revolution will be explored and analyzed. By so doing, a definition which will be useful to the analytical study of revolution will be developed. This

may also create insight into the essence of the problems that inhere in current theories of revolution. Hence, in the second part of this introductory chapter, the definitional problems of revolution will be analyzed and a rigorous definition will be introduced and measured against the case of the Iranian Revolution.¹⁸

THE CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF REVOLUTION

The concept of revolution is much debated, much misused, and much abused. This is a major reason why the study of revolutions is so confusing. In other words, the scientific study of revolution is still in its infancy as well stated by Kautsky: "There are few concepts over which there has been so much contention as that of revolution; few things are so ambiguous."¹⁹ According to Hobsbawm, it is extremely difficult to analyze revolutions in a satisfactory manner, largely because revolutions are "surrounded by a cloud of hope and disillusion, of love, hatred and fear, of their own myths and the myths of counter-propaganda."²⁰ Further, if the observers refuse to accept realities about the revolution, the comprehension of that revolution will lead them nowhere, let alone to an objective and unbiased analysis.²¹ Hence, one of the most formidable obstacles to the analytical study of revolutions lies in the fact that the definitions are so diverse that it is difficult to find consensus among the theorists of revolution. In addition, the often confusing utilization of various concepts, such as revolution, coup, palace revolution, revolt, rebellion, reform, political revolution, and social revolution, only exacerbates the problem.²²

Probably the least controversial factor in the definition of revolution is speed. The political conflict theorists define revolution in terms of "multiple sovereignty" or "dual power," thus neglecting to take into account speed as a critical defining factor. The concept of multiple sovereignty is seen as a defining element of the revolutionary situation. The idea is that a revolutionary situation develops when the existing system is challenged by violently opposing interest groups. If two or more competing contenders have access to available political, military, organizational, and financial resources to create an alternative form in addition to the existing one, the emerging sovereignty can obtain control over the government. It will use force to achieve its political goals.²³

The "dual power" concept is employed by Leon Trotsky. According to him, the presence of more than one power bloc constitutes a defining variable of a revolutionary situation. It tends to effectively control the existing party. "The historical preparation of a revolution," argues Trotsky, "brings about, in the pre-revolutionary period, a situation in which the class which is called to realize the new social system, has actually concentrated in its hands a significant share of the state power, while the official apparatus of the government is still in the hands of the old lords. That is the initial dual power in every revolution."²⁴ In his view, this duality leads to anarchic conditions, the elimination of which is the task of revolution. These views are shared by Rod Aya, who argues that the failure of the psychological and functionalist theories to explain revolution lies in the fact that they define revolution in nonpolitical terms. They thus ignore the political aspects of revolutions, namely, a situation of violent political struggle where a group of

challengers attempts to take political power by defeating the incumbent regime. Hence, his conviction is that a theory of revolution must concentrate on the analysis of dual or multiple sovereignty.²⁵

According to these theorists, a revolution can be rapid or prolonged, depending on the distribution of power, material, and political resources among the conflicting groups that compete for control. Nonetheless, the concept of the rapidity of change must be considered as one of the distinctive components of revolution. It is, indeed, the concept "rapidity" that distinguishes revolution from reform, or evolutionary change. Though it is in fact difficult to measure the concept "speed", if we exclude this factor from the definition of revolution, it will be extremely difficult to make a distinction between revolution and reform. Within a given period of time, for example, reform cannot transform society fundamentally. Yet determining the cutoff point between rapid and evolutionary change is another complicated problem that requires further investigation. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence derived from the great social revolutions (in France, Russia, China, even the Iranian and the Nicaraguan revolutions) teaches us to consider the concept of "speed" as a component part of a definition of revolution.²⁶

Another defining feature of revolution is the scope of change. There is no doubt that massive social change constitutes the key characteristic of revolution. If this factor is excluded from consideration, then how is it possible to distinguish various types of social movements from one another, for example, revolution from rebellion, revolt, or coup.²⁷ Furthermore, we are interested in analysis of revolution because of a desire to understand the dynamics of systemic social

change. Here it is appropriate to distinguish three levels of social transformation: (1) change of regime, (2) change of state structure, and (3) change of social structure. Of these three, the scope of regime change is the least dramatic form of alteration, while societal (class) transformation constitutes the most systemic change.

It is, however, logical to differentiate certain political movements which are conducive to changes at these various levels. There seems to be no objection to the contention that coups should be distinguished from revolutions because the coup is usually associated only with a change in regime.²⁸ Concerning the second and third types of change, there exist two contending alternatives: either (1) to define revolution in terms of change in state structure (defined as political change), or (2) to define it as change not only of state, but also of social (class) structure. The difference between the two definitions lies in the scope of change. Whereas the first alternative defines revolution very loosely and does not go beyond the alteration of the state structure, the latter involves a change that transforms both state and social (class) structures. Hence the first alternative does no more than define a revolution as a reform from above. Examples include the English Revolution (1640-1650), the Japanese Meiji Restoration, the Iranian Constitutional Movement of 1905-1906, which altered the system of the centralized monarchy into a parliamentary setting, and the Turkish and Egyptian movements, which led to the breakdown of dynastic political systems. None of these movements led to a fundamental transformation of social structure, that is, the class structure. In contrast to the first alternative, the second one defines revolution in the strictest

sense and identifies social change as its core feature. In regard to this definition, the English Revolution, the Meiji Restoration, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, and the Turkish and Egyptian revolutions are not revolutions at all. They are reforms from above or political revolutions.²⁹ This is simply because these movements did not culminate in fundamental alteration of class structure.

In order to realize the dynamics of basic social change, it is essential to regard qualitative and fundamental social transformation as a major characteristic of revolution rather than to define revolution as a superficial alteration of political system. In addition, it is inadequate to put reforms from above and social revolutions, involving mass-based class struggle from below, into the same class because the conditions, directions, context, dynamics, and sociopolitical implications of these two types of social change are fundamentally different. Even if the second alternative (to define revolution in terms of both political and social structures) is adopted, there still remains a problem that needs to be stated clearly -- what constitutes social transformation? Without an agreed-upon definition of this concept, it is impossible to recognize whether or not a certain social movement created social change and thus should be considered a revolution. One may, for example, assert that, as it has been defined in the past, social change under the late, dethroned Shah of Iran was a revolution. But did it really produce as fundamental a change as the French, the Russian, and the Chinese revolutions? The answer is clearly no. It did not alter the sociopolitical and class structures of the society. Moreover, as we know, change under conservative auspices usually is designed to preserve the old structures. Since the important feature of successful revolutionary

social change is a fundamental, radical, and actual change in the class structure of a society, those social movements which fail to accomplish this function cannot be termed "revolutions."

Another theoretical question remains. Is it proper to confine the scope of change to change in social structure or must it be extended to the transformation of both societal and political structures? In answering this question, it may be argued that if social change is followed by political change, in other words, if the former leads to the transformation of the latter as well, then the concept of political change does not really need to be tackled independently. If we do, it will be no more than a tautology.

But is fundamental social change possible without simultaneous transformation of political structure? This is indeed a tough theoretical question. Nonetheless, it seems that there is a marked difference between the two in the degree of change involved. For instance, one might study the Industrial Revolution in the West. This movement produced massive social changes. It is here that the time factor gains relevancy. Seen in this light, it has to be classified as a revolution. Yet despite its massive accomplishment, it did not change the political structure. Some conservative theorists may argue that change in a political or state structure is not needed and hence industrialization qualifies as revolution. However, no matter how massive a change may have been produced, it is false to classify industrialization into a single category with the French or Russian revolutions. This is basically because prerevolutionary formations were conditioned by sociopolitical contradictions. These formations were not able to resolve those contradictions.

Consequently, social revolutions were fed by political motives and class antagonism. In contrast, industrialization was not instigated by politically motivated urges. Nor was it caused by class antagonism. Therefore, it did not culminate in political transformation. In short, in the definition of revolution, the scope of change should contain the alteration of both class and state structures.³⁰

Some theorists, who employ the psychological approach to the study of revolution, emphasize the violent aspect of revolution. Some even go so far as to argue that the term "revolution" should be included in the "internal war category," reducing the analysis of the concept of revolution to a study of violence. In other words, they substitute the concept "internal war" for that of revolution, defined as "any resort to violence within a political order to change its constitution, rulers, or policies."³¹ Such change in actuality can be effected by a coup as well. Palace revolutions in Latin America provide evidence for this assertion. Another striking example is the Pahlavi dynasty of Iran. It came to power by coup and eliminated the Constitution of 1905-1906. Both father and son destroyed the content of the Constitution and only paid lip service to it. Hence, it is confusing to define revolution, a popularly well established concept, in terms of an "internal war."

Nonetheless, theoreticians and professional revolutionaries have seen violence as a defining characteristic of revolution. According to Chalmers Johnson, "Revolutionary change is a special kind of social change, one that involves the intrusion of violence into civil social relations."³² Even Brinton says that if the revolution does not incorporate violence into its definition or if it does not contain actual violent uprising, then it should involve "some kind of skullduggery."³³ It

follows from these definitions that any revolutionary change, whether we like it or not, cannot be effected without violence, simply because the ruling class refuses to step down willingly. Hence emancipation, based on Hegel's Theory of Creative Conflict, can only be realized in violent struggle. Without risking one's life, freedom cannot be achieved. Hegel thus perceives conflict as the *sine qua non* of change and growth.³⁴

Furthermore, the theories of Fanon and Debray not only emphasize the violent aspect of a revolution, seeing violence as an inevitable feature of revolution, but they also divorce revolutionary praxis from theoretical knowledge. Fanon preoccupied with the hatred and resentment caused by colonial racism and obsessed, with anticolonial thought, further stresses the critical role of violence in a revolutionary liberation of colonized formations. For him, it is only through the use of violence that liberation of the oppressed from colonial domination can be accomplished: "Violence, alone, violence committed by the people, violence organized and educated by its leaders, makes it possible for the masses to understand social truths and gives the key to them."³⁵ Fanon's claim is that in a colonized society downtrodden and deprived people are subjected to colonial powers. The people of the colonized formation are captivated to the point where they are not only denied sociopolitical and cultural identity, but also human dignity. They are dominated against their will. Because this oppression is activated by violence, the oppressed, to be able to break the chains of domination and captivity, have no alternative but to resort to violent means.

Deriving his generalizations from the Cuban example, Debray, like Fanon, emphasizes the centrality of violence. His conviction is that the objective conditions for revolution in Third World countries do exist needing only an instigator to set off a violent armed struggle against the ruling class. In his view, the crisis of political domination in the underdeveloped formations has reached a climax. The irreconcilable class conflict, imperial domination, and contradictions are acute. The already destitute and miserable condition of the masses has deteriorated to the point where no interpretation is required. What is needed, as in the Cuban case, is simply to pick up a gun and to change it.³⁶

Engels also talks about the importance of a violent revolution. The use of force is inevitable in abolishing the bourgeois state. The replacement of this state by the proletarian one is impossible without a violent revolution. Force, in his view, is the basis of revolutionary action in history; "In the words of Marx it is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new; that is the instrument with whose aid social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilized political forms."³⁷

Further evidence for the inseparability or compatibility of violence with revolution can be found in Mao's definition. According to him, "a revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another."³⁸

It is quite clear from this definition that the overthrow of the ruling class without a degree of violent action cannot be realized. It is Mao's firm conviction that the lower classes, basically the peasantry, who have no place and no rights in society, can be freed only by a violent uprising.

Yet, an overemphasis on violence in a revolutionary movement may result in the neglect of a more fundamental characteristic which is the resulting social change. This negligence, in turn, leads to a failure to distinguish revolution from coup, rebellion, and more general socioeconomic processes such as industrialization. Moreover, this weakness may then compel us to exclude the concept of violence from the definition of revolution. But if a revolution is simply a rearrangement of structure, then a coup or even an election can accomplish it.

The question is, can the sociopolitical structures of a society be changed within a relatively short period of time without violence? This question is, in fact, an empirical one. Usually the revolutions which have taken place have, to some extent, involved violence. Hence, with respect to empirical and historical evidence, it is probably appropriate to incorporate the "violence" variable into the framework of theoretical construction. If it is excluded from the definition of revolution, the problems, which constitute important theoretical questions about the revolution, will remain unresolved.³⁹ This is simply because there is very little, if any, empirical evidence to persuade us that the ruling class will step down of its own free will. Seen in this light, the concept of violence must be incorporated into the definition of revolution to make it theoretically sound.

For Hannah Arendt, the acquisition of political freedom, which is stifled by governmental despotism, constitutes the key defining feature of a revolution. It is this quest for freedom in revolution which makes the term "revolution" a modern phenomenon. As Arendt argues, before the modern age, revolutions were instigated exclusively by a desire to replace a tyrant or usurper who abused his power, by exercising power beyond rights without paying any attention to future social goals or desires. In her view, violence without aim, utilized to bring about revolution, is not sufficient to define revolution. We can speak of revolution only where violence is employed to construct a new political system, "where the liberation from oppression aims at the constitution of freedom."⁴⁰ This definition reflects, implicitly or explicitly, the assumption that a revolution is made by certain groups that have specific goals. This is a subjective and voluntaristic interpretation of revolution, for, as the causes of historical revolutions indicate, revolutions are not made, they come about.⁴¹

In addition, history reveals that, in many cases, revolutions can take place without prior planning. Hence, they were not caused or conditioned by conscious political actions to direct them in certain predetermined directions. For instance, Skocpol argues that social revolutions are caused by long run defining critical factors. They are the result of structural contradictions and internal sociopolitical strains. Only when these convulsive stresses and strains reach a certain peak will the sociopolitically injured conscious classes be invoked into protest. Their discontent emanates from structural contradictions and thus they can be rallied for revolutionary political action. The question is whether it is appropriate

to include the term "goal" in the definition of revolution. True enough, some revolutions may come about, but they surely have objectives. Nonetheless, it is not necessary to include the term "goal" in the definition of revolutions as a defining feature. As was mentioned earlier, the scope of change not only distinguishes revolution from other social movements, it indirectly provides for this perspective as well.⁴²

The most important element in need of consideration in the definition of revolution concerns agents or actors of change. Do we have to distinguish revolutions from other social movements by the actors who initiate the political action from below? An inquiry into the literature or theoretical analysis on revolution leads to two answers to this question. General theories of revolution do not tell us who are the initiators of revolutions. They tend to ignore the significance of this factor. But, if by revolution is meant structural transformation of society and state, there is no reason why a reform from above should not be defined as a revolution. For instance, the late Shah of Iran along with his theoreticians called his reform programs initiated from above a revolution. It is clearly inadequate to classify into a single category the Shah's reform program and the Iranian mass-based revolution of 1978-1979. In fact, the two have nothing in common. The revolutions in France, Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Iran, and Nicaragua were associated with massive, class-based participation from below.

One of the merits in defining revolution in terms of actors of change from below is that we can more systematically grasp the dynamics of mass participation. Besides, reforms initiated from above are designed primarily to

buttress the status quo, while revolutions accomplished by mass participation from below result in more systemic, radical changes. Hence, agents of change, or a class that implements the revolutionary praxis, must be included in the definition of revolution. Social upheaval in which class struggles are dominant must be regarded as a major defining feature of, rather than incidental feature to, revolution. It is only then that one can distinguish social revolutions from other social movements.⁴³ Indeed, we cannot make any distinction among different sociopolitical movements on an a priori basis, but only through inquiry utilizing comparative analysis and empirical investigation.

Without taking into account the above-mentioned factors, the formulation of an accurate theory of revolution is impossible. Further, it will lead to a definition of revolution by a subjective intention, for instance, to define a revolution by an attempt to seize state power. And, indeed, this will be no more than a poorly supported theoretical approach, for such a subjective intention may force us to fall into the trap of accepting a voluntaristic mode of revolution, which is simply not accurate. It totally ignores other causative factors, for example, socioeconomic contradictions, which are anchored in institutional structures and have the potential to generate revolutionary movements.

The foregoing discussion leads to the following definition of revolution: rapid, violent transformations of a society's political, socioeconomic, and class structures from below. In other words, a revolution is differentiated from other forms of social change by a combination of factors: sociopolitical/economic transformations, societal-structural alteration, and class uprising organized from

below. This definition is somewhat similar to Skocpol's view of revolution: "Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below."⁴⁴ Lenin provides rather a different, but complementary view: "Revolutions are the festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order."⁴⁵

These two definitions point out the distinctive characteristics of a social revolution. The combination of the two, emphasizing the basic structural alterations of a society effectuated and accompanied by class uprising from below, constitutes the basic defining feature of a revolution. In reality, it is this transformation of state/class structures and massive class struggle from below that differentiates social revolutions from coups, rebellions, and national liberation movements, and from revolutions from above as well.⁴⁶

In this dissertation I shall utilize this politically based definition of revolution. Contrary to the theoreticians of general theories of revolution, which consider the explicandum that is "revolution" as a nonpolitical concept, I see revolution as primarily political. It can be thus safely asserted that the failure of the existing general theories of revolution stems in part from this negligence, or, to put it properly, from the apolitical character of those themes.⁴⁷ In view of this failure, the chosen definition above is preferred and can, therefore, appropriately be employed to produce a theory which will explain revolutionary social transformation.

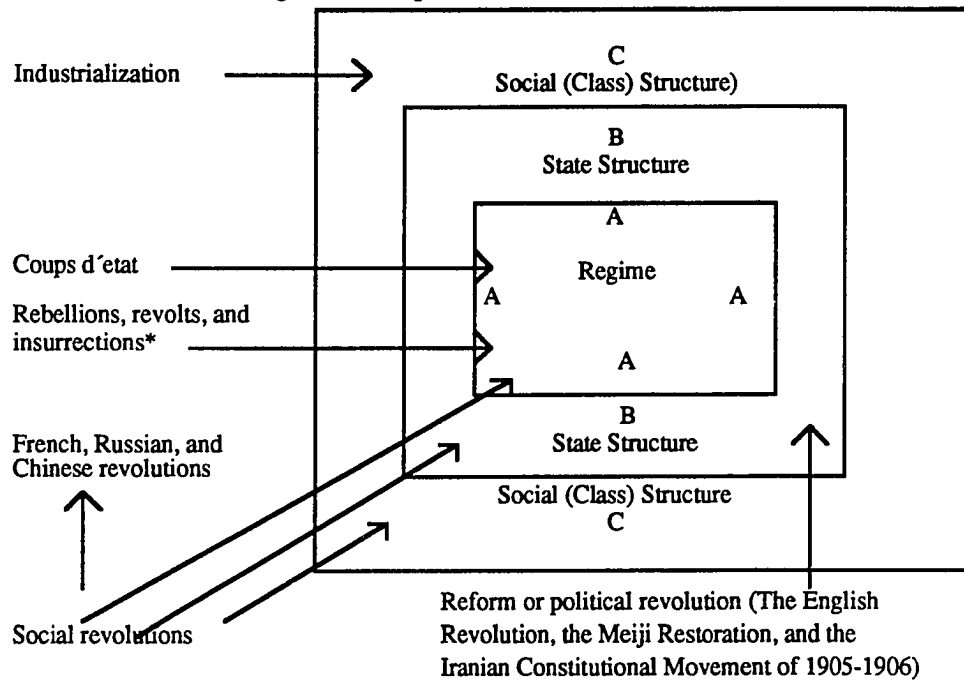
In order to facilitate comprehension of the analysis up to this point, a typology of social movements is presented in Table 1. This classificatory scheme differentiates social revolutions from other societal movements. It also indicates whether each movement incorporates the basic variables (speed, violence, scope of change, and agents of social change from below) into its definition. Figure 1 delineates the scope of societal transformations which are effected by social movements.

As Figure 3 indicates, social revolutions lead to the transformation of $A+B+C$, whereas reform or political revolutions may result in alteration of state structures, that is, B's, and are not necessarily initiated by class struggle. Coups change A only. Rebellions, revolts, or insurrections have the potential to effect a change. Yet they may or may not alter A. Although industrialization, because it involves massive social change, has often been defined as a genuine, thoroughgoing revolution, it only changes social structures and has nothing to do with political structural transformations. Nor is it accompanied by political upheaval.⁴⁸ In sum, in order to make the analytical study of revolution possible, the differentiation of different social movements is highly essential. Otherwise, conceptual chaos and theoretical confusion tend to obscure the formulation of an objective scientific theory.

Table 1. A Classification of Social Movements

Initiating Factors in Revolution		Social Revolutions	Evolutionary Change	Reform or Political Change	Rebellions Revolts, and Insurrections	Industrialization	Coup d'etat
Speed of Change		Rapid	Slow	Rapid/Slow	Rapid	Rapid/Slow	Rapid
Presence of Violence		Yes	No	Yes/No	Yes	No	Yes
Scope of Change	Regime	Yes	Yes	Yes/No	No	No	Yes
	State Structure	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Social (Class) Structure	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Agents of Social Change from Below		Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No

Figure 3. Scope of Social Transformation



*These three types of social movements have the potential for change.

ENDNOTES

¹The major works in this context are James C. Davies (ed.), When Men Revolt and Why (New York: Free Press, 1971); Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Revolt (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970).

²For an effective and fundamental criticism, see Rod Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," Theory and Society 8 (1979):39-99. See also J. Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution: The Third Generation," World Politics 32 (1979-80):425-53.

³The structural functionalist model formulated by its leading exponent, Chalmers Johnson, is being used here. See Revolutionary Change (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1966). Johnson believes that social dislocation, caused by strain and stresses or dysfunction, is the necessary condition which leads to revolutionary conflict.

⁴See, for example, M. Freeman "Theories of Revolution," British Journal of Political Science 2 (1972):339-58. See also Hossein Bashiriyeh, The State and Revolution in Iran (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984). In Bashiriyeh's opinion, structural functionalism fails to explain revolution.

⁵See Dale L. Johnson (ed.), Class and Social Development: A New Theory of Middle-Class (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1982), pp. 74-78.

⁶For an excellent analysis and criticism of functionalism, see Andre' Gunder Frank, "Functionalism and Dialectics," in Latin America Underdevelopment or Revolution (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), pp. 95-107.

⁷Charles Tilly's major studies in this category include the following: "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" Comparative Politics 5 (1973):427-47; The Rebellious Century, 1830-1930 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1975); From Mobilization to Revolution (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978). Tilly's analysis of revolution does not stand up to empirical validation. In other words, his study cannot be validated by empirical testing. On the basis of his definition, any kind of violence, ranging from ethnic conflicts to wars of succession, can be classified as revolution. Yet he effectively demonstrates that modernization does not lead to revolution nor does it feed revolution.

⁸Harry Eckstein, "The Etiology of Internal War," History and Theory 2 (1965):133-63.

⁹See Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution," pp. 430-431.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 430-35.

¹¹Theda Skocpol, State and Social Revolution (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). Although her theory effectively explains the great social revolutions (French, Russian, and Chinese), and is affirmed by empirical analysis, it fails to explain the Iranian Revolution. Nonetheless, her already empirically validated critical defining variables, for example, uneven capitalist development, intrusion of capitalism on domestic economics, and military pressures on state resources, will be retained and called critical B variables. In fact, all of these factors sparked the discontent which played a fundamental role in the revolution in Iran.

¹²For a good critical view, see Skocpol and Ellen Kay Trimberger, "Revolutions and the World, Historical Development of Capitalism," in Berkeley Journal of Sociology 5:22 (1977-78):101-113.

¹³Fred Halliday and Maxine Molyneux, "Marxism, the Third World, and the Middle East," MERIP Reports 14-1 (January 1984):18-21.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁵Albert Szymanski, "Capital Accumulation on a World Scale and the Necessity of Imperialism," The Insurgent Sociologist 7 (1977):35-54.

¹⁶See Patrick Clawson, "Capital Accumulation in Iran," Oil and Class Struggle, ed. Peter Nore and Terisa Turner (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp. 143-72.

¹⁷It may be objected that Japan was allowed to become a rival capitalistic force. This objection might be granted, but note that, while condemning the Nazi extermination of the Jews, the United States was the first country in the history of mankind to use atomic bombs on civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This genocidal policy killed, respectively, from 100,000 to 150,000 and from 35,000 to 75,000. It led to the disarmament of the country. It was not allowed to build up a military infrastructure. To make up for it, the Japanese were granted a sympathetic concession to help rid them of that nightmare. Hence, the disarmament of the country and the defense system provided by the United States enabled Japan to generously concentrate its capital investment on minds, which in turn led to massive revitalization and progress. As it has become a rival to U. S. imperialism and competitively challenges its hegemony, we now see pressure from the U.S. to force the Japanese government to build up its own defenses. This represents an

intrusion from this international environment on the Japanese economy, which may, if successful, undermine its competitiveness with the West. Therefore, it is not difficult to see why Japan has been allowed to become a fully developed rival. (See Jalal Al Ahmad, "Gharbzadagi" ("Westoxication"), Tehran 7, 1341, p. 90.) In addition, it must be remembered, Japan itself within the context of Southeast Asia prior to World War II, was an imperialist power. Hence, like Europe, it did have potential, so far as the accumulation process is concerned, for revitalization, technical strength, and the background for capital development, that is, modernization and progress.

¹⁸Not all of the existing literature on revolution will be surveyed nor will the problems which plague the theoretical study of revolution be taken up one by one. Rather, crucial components of revolution will be explored and analyzed to come up with a working definition and simultaneously to recognize the problems associated with that definition's meaning. For an extensive survey of the literature, see A. S. Cohen, Theories of Revolution: An Introduction (New York: Halstead Press, 1975); Mark V. Hagopian, The Phenomenon of Revolution (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1974); Lawrence Stone, "Theories of Revolution," World Politics 18:2 (January, 1966):159-76; Michael Freeman, "Review Article: Theories of Revolution," British Journal of Political Science 2:3 (July 1972):339-59.

¹⁹Karl Kautsky, "The Concept of Social Revolution," in Kautsky's The Social Revolution (Chicago: C. H. Kerr, 1902), p. 5. See also Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," particularly p. 43. Isaac Kramnick, in an article entitled, "Reflections on Revolution: Definition and Explanation in Recent Scholarship," History and Theory 11:1 (1972):26-63, argues that no one from academia has expressed a single voice on the concept of revolution. Hence, his views on the definition of revolution are "confused," "complicated," and "untidy" sets of observations. See also James A. Bill, "Political Violence and Political Change: A Conceptual Commentary," in Violence as Politics: A Series of Original Essays, ed. Herbert Hirsch and David E. Perry (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 220-34.

²⁰E. J. Hobsbawm, Revolutionaries (London: Quarter Books, 1973), p. 201.

²¹*Ibid*, part V, chap. 20.

²²For a good example see Sidney Hook, Revolution, Reform and Social Justice, (New York: New York University Press, 1975): pp. 99-103. See Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). See also Raymond Tanter and Manus Midlarsky, "A Theory of Revolution," Journal of Conflict Resolutions 5.11: 3 (1967):264-80, and Perez Zagorin, "Theories of Revolution in Contemporary Historiography," Political Science Quarterly 88:1 (March 1973):23-53.

²³See Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1978), pp. 189-242.

²⁴Leon Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution, 2 vols. (Lexington, Mass: D. C. Heath, 1965), p. 224.

²⁵For further information, see Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," esp. p. 40.

²⁶See, for example, Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 264. Huntington includes the term "speed" or "rapidity" in his definition of revolution: "A revolution is a rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, government activity, and policies" (p. 264; emphasis added).

²⁷See, for instance, Tanter and Midlarsky, "A Theory of Revolution," in JCR, v. 11 (1967):266. See also Hannah Arendt, On Revolution (New York: Viking Press, 1963), p. 40; and Eugene Kamenka, "The Concept of Revolution," Nomos VIII: Revolution (New York, 1967), p. 125.

²⁸See Michael Walzer, "A Theory of Revolution," in Marxist Perspectives (Spring 1979):30-44; Huntington, Political Order; Midlarsky, "A Theory of Revolution," pp. 264-67. Lawrence Stone distinguishes between various kinds of mass revolution. He introduces a typology which differentiates various movements, for example, the Jacquerie, the Anarchistic Rebellion, the Jacobin Communist Revolution, and the Militaristic Mass Insurrection, in "Theories of Revolution," World Politics 18:2 (January 1966):162-63; Elbaki Hermassi distinguishes between the types of revolutions in "Toward a Comparative Study of Revolutions," Comparative Studies in Society and History 18 (1976):211-35. For a major contribution to the analytical and scientific study of revolution, see Ben Turok (ed.), Revolutionary Thought in the 20th Century (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp. 1-28.

²⁹Tanter and Midlarsky present an extensive and more effective analysis concerning the meaning of revolution and classification of revolutions, "A Theory of Revolution," pp. 264-69.

³⁰See, for an extensive analysis, John Ehrenberg, "The Politics of Historical Materialism," Contemporary Marxism, no. 9 (Fall 1984):43-55. Attention should be focused on social revolution, pp. 50-55. In connection with this argument, see Alan Gilbert, "Social Theory and Revolutionary Activity in

Marx," American Political Science Review 73: 2 (June 1979):521-38. See also Isaac Kramnick, "Reflections on Revlution: Definition and Explanation in Recent Scholarship," pp. 26-40. His paper effectively deals with definitional problems and the political features of a revolution. For an in-depth realization, see Theda Skocpol, State and Social Revolutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 3-5. She distinguishes social revolutions from political ones and argues how they can reinforce each other. In such transformations, contrary to transformative processes like industrialization, class struggles play a critical role.

³¹Harry Eckstein, "On the Etiology of Internal Wars," History and Theory 4 (1965):133. See also idem (ed.), Internal War: Problems and Approaches (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964). Furthermore, many theorists define revolution as the presence of violence in the political process. Examples include Hannah Arendt, On Revolution (New York: Viking Press, 1965); Sheldon Wolin, "Foreword" to Johnson's "Revolutionary Change," viii, ix; Ted R. Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton University Press, 1970), James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," American Sociological Review 27 (1962), Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 264-334.

³²Chalmers Johnson, Revolutionary Change (Boston & Toronto: Little, Brown, 1966), pp. 1-2.

³³Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 4.

³⁴G. F. W. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit (1807), trans. A. V. Miller (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 114. See also his Philosophy of Right, trans. T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press).

³⁵Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963), pp. 35-107. In his view, everything between the oppressing class and the oppressed can be solved by violent means. Fanon was largely influenced by Hegelian dialectics and creative conflict. In Hegel's view, struggle is the only means whereby "self-assertion" and "self-maintenance" vis-a vis the other party can be realized. "It is only by risking life that one preserves liberty." Human reality, therefore, can be accomplished in struggle, and this means violence and the risk it implies. See for further information B. Marie Perinban, Holy Violence, the Revolutionary Thought of Frantz Fanon (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1982). See also Jack Woddis, New Theories of Revolution (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1972), p. 27.

³⁶R. Debray, Revolution in the Revolution? (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967).

³⁷Friedrich Engels, Anti-Duhring (London and New York: International Publishers, 1933). An inquiry into Lenin's state and revolution also reveals this case. According to Lenin, the state exists because class antagonism cannot be reconciled. Hence it is "a force standing above the society," separating itself from it. If this thesis is accepted, the emancipation of the working class along with the oppressed, on the whole, would be contingent upon a violent revolution and the destruction of the state apparatus. For further information, see chapter 1 in State of Revolution. See also Lawrence Stone, "Recent Academic View of Revolution," in Revolutions, a Comparative Study, ed. Lawrence Kaplan (New York: Random House, 1973), pp. 25-46. This chapter has also been published in World Politics 18:2 (January 1966):154-76. Bizhan Jazani also emphasizes the role of violence as a major force of a revolutionary upheaval. See Capitalism and Revolution in Iran, trans. Iran Committee (London: Zed Press, 1980).

³⁸Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Works of Mao, Volume I (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1977), p. 28.

³⁹See, for example, Perez Zagorin's article "Theories of Revolution," pp. 23-52. For a detailed analysis concerning this problem, see Kramnick's "Problems in Definition," pp. 26-35.

⁴⁰Hannah Arendt, On Revolution (New York: Viking Press, 1963), p. 28. For a good analysis, see Raymond Tanter et al., "A Theory of Revolution," Journal of Conflict Resolution 2 (1967):264-80, esp. pp. 264-265.

⁴¹Stephen F. Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution (New York: Knopf, 1973), p. 336. See also Theda Skocpol, State and Social Revolutions, p. 17.

⁴²See footnote 6 in Skocpol State and Social Revolutions, pp. 294-95. See also p. 17.

⁴³Skocpol, in State and Social Revolutions, distinguishes social movements from each other. See pp. 3-5 for her persuasive analysis.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁵Stephan T. Possony (ed.), The Lenin Reader (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1966), p. 349.

⁴⁶See, for example, Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," Comparative Studies in Society and History 18 (1976):175-210.

⁴⁷Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," presents a highly valuable critical analysis on general theories of revolution. For support of this argument, see especially pp. 39-40.

⁴⁸See, for example, Skocpol, State and Social Revolutions, pp. 4-5.

CHAPTER I

J-CURVE ANALYSIS

The aggregate psychological approach attempts to explain revolutions in terms of the psychological motivations of participants in political violence. Its basic assumption, labeled by Rod Aya "the volcanic model,"¹ and by Walter Goldfrank, "the pressure cooker model,"² is that the revolution is generated in the minds of men. According to this approach, abrupt and rapid change in the structure of a society creates enormous societal disorientation, alienation, and hardship, on the one hand, and raises the level of people's expectations, on the other. As the pressure of demands builds up more rapidly than the means to satisfy them, people experience a sharp sense of frustration accompanied by the disintegration of communal bonds and an increasing "disharmony between life experiences and the normative framework which regulates them."³ The instigated tensions then result in deviation, "crime," "suicide," and "spontaneous outbursts of popular misery."⁴

Thus, the "pressure cooker" model locates the causes of revolution in stresses and strains. It assumes that rapid and uncontrolled structural change generates tensions which, if not released, erupt into mass political violence. The sources of these tensions are twofold: frustration resulting when expectations exceed their possibility of satisfaction, and dislocations suffered by new urbanites who are deprived of traditional norms and values and subjected to the complicated and impersonal modern urban life. People find it extremely difficult to adjust to the new and complex life. When irritability develops, sooner or later, discontented

individuals find a way out in the form of collective violence. The theorists of this school of thought thus see the root cause of revolution in the state of mind of the masses. For them, the outbreak of revolution is likely only when the masses enter a cognitive state of "frustration" or "deprivation" relative to the desired set of goals.⁵

The leading exponents of this approach are James C. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr; thus the analysis will concentrate on their works.⁶ To start with, Davies defines revolution as "violent civil disturbances that cause the displacement of one ruling group by another that has a broader popular basis of support."⁷ If this is so, then when are revolutions most likely to occur? Providing an answer to this question constitutes the basic goal of Davies' theory. He formulates two assumptions: (1) a "revolution is most likely to take place when a prolonged period of rising expectations and rising gratifications is followed by a short period of sharp reversal, during which the gap between expectations and gratifications quickly widens and becomes intolerable";⁸ and (2) "it is the dissatisfied state of mind rather than the tangible provision of 'adequate' or 'inadequate' supplies of food, equality, or liberty which produces the revolution."⁹ As Davies' second assumption indicates, objective conditions are held to be less significant than the individual's "state of mind." His theory is known as the J-curve. It can be illustrated as follows:

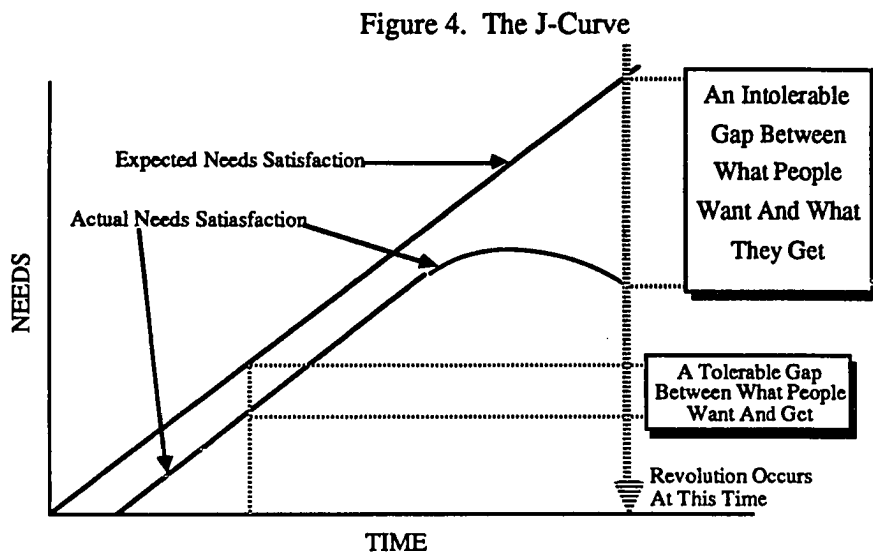


Figure 4. The J-Curve. Source: Davies, J. C., When Men Revolt and Why, 1971, p. 135.

This J-curve is a hypothetical line graph showing the gradual rise and sudden fall in gratifications. When the fatal gap develops between what people want and what they can actually get, frustration results and is resolved only in violent movements.

According to this model, this widening gap leads to an irritated state of mind. The suggestion is that people tend to fear not "just that things will no longer continue to get better but -- even more crucially -- that they may lose what they have already achieved."¹⁰ This kind of feeling results in individuals seeking violent outlets. And this "dissonant energy reaches its critical peak while it becomes a resonant, very powerful force that heads like a great tidal wave or forest fire toward the established government." A revolution is then said to be

revolution from rebellion, Davies argues that the root causes of both revolution and rebellion are the same, but the results are different. Whereas a revolution removes the established order, the rebellion does not.)¹¹

Furthermore, the J-curve theory seeks societal conflicts in rising expectations and the frustrations brought about by a rapid reversal in social conditions after a prolonged period of betterment. The key psychological mechanisms Davies employs include the insecurity, fear, and discontent which sudden reversal can breed. In his view, socioeconomic improvement by itself does not result in revolution; rather, the attitude of people toward their conditions is the major determining element. In this sense, when the rise of expectations is no longer accompanied by the efforts to satisfy them, rebellion takes place. In order to support his formulation, Davies examines Dorr's Rebellion in America in 1842, the French Revolution of 1789, the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Black Rebellion of the 1960s, and the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, claiming that these historical movements are compatible with the J-curve formulation.¹²

The J-Curve Analysis and the Iranian Revolution

In order to test the applicability of the J-curve analysis to the Iranian experience, it is necessary to see what reversal of "rising expectations" in Iran sparked the discontent which led to the 1978-1979 Iranian Revolution. I believe it is a simplistic and naive generalization to attempt to explain a class-determined revolution from below by a single variable, no matter how empirically valid it might be, because an exclusive concentration on one indicator, in this case, the reversal

experience, may blind the investigator to other critical factors which may play a key role in revolution's occurrence in epochal struggles. Reliance on the reversal assumption will lead the researcher to ignore such factors as historical analysis, class struggle, uneven development, external factors, political alienation, sociopolitical and economic contradictions, political class action from below, class alliance, mass mobilization, and repressive state control, which have all played critical defining roles in social revolutions occurring throughout modern history.

Any theory that tends to dissociate revolutionary change from these factors is, indeed, a faulty formulation. Davies theory does not contain these factors. The J-curve model with its narrow microfocus excludes macropolitical structures, for example, the incursion of the external market on the domestic one, the negative character of externally supported political institutions, and, above all, direct and indirect intervention by metropolitan political centers. Third World formations are not isolated or autonomous. They are the "weakest link" of capitalistic centers; hence, they can be easily manipulated by trade relations and unequal economic exchange. International imperial cartels can, in fact, adopt a type of policy which might well lead to a disastrous development. They can strengthen or weaken those formations either through credit and financial support or intervention.¹³

Iran, as will be analyzed in detail in Part Three (section VI-4), had been integrated into the world capitalist system, thus forming a weak link within the metropolis chain. In this context, it is important to realize that uneven development - growth of one sector and stagnation of other - is a primary characteristic of

capitalistic development. This "law of uneven or combined development" promotes the socioeconomic status of one class and demotes or impoverishes the other. Historical analysis constitutes the heart of this formulation. As capitalism assumes the role of a world system, the history of the world becomes a contradictory one, and socioeconomic development takes place in an unequal manner. According to Trotsky, "Capitalism prepares and in a certain sense realizes the universality and permanence of man's development. By this a repetition of the forms of development by different nations is ruled out. Although compelled to follow after the advanced countries, a backward country does not take things in the same order." The Third World formations are forced to adopt certain characteristics of the advanced metropolis, while skipping the intermediary stages. "Savages," he argues, "throw away their bows and arrows for rifles all at once without travelling the road which lay between those two weapons in the past." This, to the peripheral formations, means the combination of the different stages of development within the historical development process.¹⁴

Unevenness was indeed manifest within Iranian sociopolitical and economic development. Under pressure from the external forces and internal necessity, the Iranian formation, without, an effective progressive-looking infrastructure, was compelled to make sudden, rapid forward leaps. And by this was meant, in Trotsky's words, a "combined development," which, in turn, involved an amalgamation of old and modern perspectives and combinations of various stages of development.¹⁵ The engine of Iran's combined development was oil. It constituted 98 percent of Iran's exports to the Western capitalist markets,

which were not controlled by the Iranian political system. The economic upsurge or, "takeoff," which was the direct result of increased oil prices, had no connection whatsoever with a basic transformation of the economic structure of the country or the development of productive sectors. Oil money injected into the Iranian economy went to finance service sectors and to buy Western ready-made goods and products at higher prices. The needs were satisfied by oil money. Hence, the country did not have a chance to develop productive sectors or initiate a fundamental industrialization program.

In 1964 the Iranian Premier made a claim that Iran would catch up with the highly developed and industrialized societies in the world within fifteen years. This assertion, for the purpose of public consumption, had been widely propagated in Iran, but was, in reality, no more than a boast. For instance, at the peak of developmentalism, the exports of Iranian non oil goods were no more than 2 percent. The remaining 98 percent, as mentioned earlier, included oil and gas. 2 percent of non oil exports were broken down as follows: agricultural goods, 51 percent (Prior to land reform in 1961-1962, Iran was an exporter of agricultural products.); traditional goods, that is, carpets, handicrafts, and the like, 28 percent; and modern industrial goods, 21 percent. Hence, at the height of becoming the world's "fifth most industrial state" (1977-1978), exports of traditional goods amounted to 79 percent, and of modern industrial exports, 21 percent.¹⁶

Furthermore, in order to provide a solution to the internal contradictions of capitalism, the petrodollar was to be repatriated to the metropolis. Iran was thus compelled to purchase and absorb as many Western goods as

possible, thus blocking alternative productive development, which could replace oil economy in times of crisis. The agricultural sector was hence subjected to destruction. While the urban areas developed and prospered, the rural ones stagnated; while a greater amount of wealth, capital, and power was concentrated in major provincial cities and classes, the small cities and dispossessed classes suffered. The demise of local self-sufficiency, the huge gap between rural and urban income levels, the expansion of the construction industry, and urban development as a whole led to a massive push/pull movement to the cities, primarily the capital city, Tehran, and other major provinces. The flight of the peasantry to the cities as a result of uneven development was a tremendous phenomenon, a process which systemically displaced the precapitalistic forces. As the developmental process accelerated, so did the displacement and exploitation of the newly unleashed forces. Thus, uneven development led to the proletarianization of precapitalist forces, converting them into wage laborers. This process sharply antagonized class relations and finally led to the radicalization of the affected socioeconomic classes. In reality, the process of uneven development made a major contribution to the expansion of the role of the radical forces who had never ceased their opposition to the Pahlavi regime.¹⁷

This problem was exacerbated by the lack of an effective infrastructure to handle socioeconomic development and initiate basic industrialization. Even to process and implement the assembly industries required that foreign experts be brought in, which, in turn, led to dependent development.¹⁸ However, the engine of this development from the beginning to the end was oil. It was evident that any

crisis within the capitalist markets, a fluctuation, or even political blackmail, was enough to break down the entire developmental program in Iran. And thus the negative impact of the 1974-1975 recession in the West accelerated the revolutionary process in Iran. Yet this external dynamism could not become operative without internal causes. Therefore, it was internal structural contradictions which were ultimately to break the system down. In reality the class character of the regime, through the process of dependency and uneven development, had already antagonized the socioclass relations. Hence what the economic recession did was to accelerate the formation of a revolutionary, class-determined political action from below.

In actuality the "reversal" thesis has very little, if anything, to say about those critical contributing factors. It fails to point out what causal factors lie behind the assumption of a decline. What is the reason for the reversal tendency? Who gets what? Whose action affects whom? Who is in control of production? Why do those who own the means of production not participate in revolutionary action when there is a decline? Perhaps because they are not affected. If so, then the explanation is that the society, as described by the J-curve, is divided into the haves and the have nots. It is a class society.

Davies' theory leaves all of these questions unanswered. In order to be able to answer them, the theory has to link the micro-to macroanalysis. But, unfortunately, Davies' theory does not treat the dominant repressive political structures or the contradictions accompanying them.

If reversal thesis is such a critical defining factor, given the fact that probably the sharpest and most drastic decline took place recently as the oil prices per barrel were cut almost in half, then the oil-producing Middle Eastern countries in general and Texas in particular might have all exploded in radical revolution. But there have not been any political action at all. Many political incidents have taken place in the Middle East, but they were not transformed into a revolutionary movement. In Texas, students got angry over the triple increase of tuition, which was directly associated with the transition from a long-run prosperity to a sharp decline, and chanted "No more Hobby." Supposedly, the lieutenant governor was behind the drive to increase tuition. Yet, ironically, he was reelected and there was no evidence of any political unrest. Why did revolution not take place as a result of these incidents, especially in OPEC countries? This analysis clearly shows that the reversal thesis alone cannot explain a revolutionary situation.¹⁹

However, in order to answer the question raised at the beginning of the argument, it may be plausible to assume that, following the increase in oil revenues, Iran had become, compared to the early 1950s and 1960s, relatively prosperous. (This view is disputed by many Iranians. They used to call it the creation of a false prosperity and the deceptive culture of consumption.²⁰ On this account and the promotion thesis, see section VII-4.) It is true that the oil boom sharpened aspirations and heightened expectations. It also intensified class tension. It widened the already existing gap between the haves and the have nots. While a few benefited greatly, most of the lower class benefited less. Life got better for the rich, but for the poor it did not improve as was expected. Thus it is a somewhat

simplistic generalization to take Davies' reversal hypothesis for granted simply because economic decline does not, nor is it expected to, affect all socioeconomic classes equally. In Iran, the lower, disinherited classes, in fact, had relatively little share in the wealth brought about by the oil boom. This class, as a matter of fact, suffered severely from the greatly expanding gap between what they desired and what they got.²¹

Moreover, according to one study, Iranian society appeared to be the most "inegalitarian society in the world."²² This finding was reinforced by yet another study which investigated the expenditure on consumption and income distribution of urban and rural households in 1969-1970. It revealed that income distribution in Iran was extremely unequal and Iranian socioeconomic classes suffered sharply from prevailing social disparities.²³ The Gini coefficient happened to be "as high as 07," in fact.²⁴

The number of poor were very numerous. The poor did not gain very much from the boom. Those who lived in rural Iran were worse off than the urbanites. In addition, there were more poor people in rural areas than in urban settings. The poor rural population and ruralists in general were mostly illiterate. They were agricultural laborers living from hand to mouth. Migrant poor in the cities were mostly constructions workers; few of them worked in manufacturing plants.²⁵ Table 1 demonstrates that economic decline does not affect all classes in an equal manner.

Table 1: Measuring the Inequality of Income
(Consumption Expenditures)

Year	Share of Top 20 %	Share of Middle 40 %	Share of Bottom 40 %	Gini* Coefficient
	A	B	C	
1959-60	51.79	27.54	13.90	0.4552
1969-70	52.91	26.96	12.99	0.4710
1970-71	54.30	26.05	12.71	0.4849
1971-72	55.48	25.49	11.65	0.5051
1972-73	55.33	26.29	11.88	0.4916
1973-74	55.56	26.06	11.96	0.4946
1974-75	56.05	25.82	10.91	0.5126

Source: M. H. Pesaran and F. Gahvary, "Growth and Income Distribution in Iran," in R. Stone and W. Peterson (eds.), Econometric Contribution to Public Policy, p. 237.

As Table 1 clearly indicates, the pattern of consumption expenditures shows great societal inequality. The expenditures of A, B, and C classes or groups are sharply unequal. For instance, the income discrepancy between A and C since 1959 has constantly expanded. A's share between 1959 and 1975 increased over five times compared to C's. A's income share was also more than B's.

Furthermore, inequality in income distribution from 1959 to 1975 tended to increase. The Gini Index also shows increased societal inequality in Iran. Whereas between 1959-1960 it was 0.4552, by 1975 it had increased to 0.5126. However, during the 1971-1972 and 1973-1974 periods, the distribution tended to be exceptionally stable and improving.²⁶

The table also shows that the share of the top 20 percent has continued to increase. B's share decreased during the period in question, as did C's share.

If per capita consumption expenditures of urban and rural households are compared, the inegalitarian nature of the Iranian regime is further emphasized, (See Table 2).

Table 2: Per Capita Consumption Expenditures
of Urban/Rural Households (RLS)

Year	Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (Rials)	
	Urban	Rural
1959	14,923	7,012
1960	15,740	7,164
1961	15,857	7,400
1962	16,502	7,638
1963	16,213	7,443
1964	16,743	7,993
1965	16,277	8,375
1966	18,714	8,314
1967	19,197	8,648
1968	22,027	8,590
1969	24,659	8,134
1970	26,820	8,243
1971	25,866	8,036
1972	27,542	7,423
1973	31,843	8,351
1974	34,159	9,183
1975	38,595	9,328
1976	40,789	10,706

Source: "Political Economy of Growth and Destruction: A Statistical Interpretation of the Iranian Case," *Iranian Studies* 12 (Winter-Spring 1979):46.

The comparison of the expenditure distribution of urban and rural areas shows that the variation was incredibly high and that the gap between the two continued to widen. As Table 2 shows, the ratio of urban expenditure in 1959-1960 was about 2 and rose to approximately 4 in 1976.²⁷ Yet, an inquiry into the 1963-1973 period shows that the income distribution within the rural areas got worse. Whereas in 1963 the share of the lowest 40 percent of the rural population was 19.5 percent, in 1973, the year of the oil boom, this had declined to 16 percent and the share of the upper 20 percent had increased from 41 percent in 1963 to 48 percent in 1973.²⁸

This inequality not only seriously questions the nature of developmentalism and the economic boom, but also reinforces the fact that capitalistic accumulation benefits the rich to the detriment of the poor or lower classes of society.²⁹ And this empirical presentation clearly defeats the purpose of J-curve analysis. How could the theory really measure the ratio of "gratification" expectations? With a nonempirical index, it is impossible to achieve this objective. Looking at Table 1, how can the J-curve persuade us that in the prerevolutionary situation in Iran, the intensity of feelings of C class or class B was equal to class A's? As is clear from the table, the economic growth or even the boom of 1973, when compared to the socioeconomic status of classes B and C during the 1959-1976 period, made no considerable contribution to the prosperity of these classes, but there was an improvement. Instead, A's gains have been constantly on the rise. There is no reason why A's enjoying high status should share C's or B's

grievances. Were A's as aggrieved, as frustrated, as C's and B's? In other words, did these classes suffer the same? The statistics do not provide a positive answer. In addition, in Iran, where the top 5 percent of the urban class possessed as much wealth as 60 percent of the urban lower class, can one really talk about a decline-after-improvement thesis? Why did the A's not experience any decline in their gains between 1959 and 1976? Why in a society like that of Iran does the socioeconomic status of one class constantly rise and another decline? The disparity between haves and have nots creates an ever-expanding rural-urban gap, including regional inequalities, unequal income distribution, and the nonexistence of the popular principle "to each according to his work," which constitutes the fundamental characteristic of class societies. Because Davies' theory lacks a class focus, it fails to answer these questions, nor can it explain structural contradictions which played a critical defining role in the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979.³⁰

Now, as we know, the Iranian Revolution was a multiclass-based upheaval. And this means that, with the exception of the army, security forces, and loyalists who stood on the Shah's side, all other forces, including the rich whose income had not declined, participated in the revolution. Moreover, the workers in the oil fields were the best paid and most privileged in comparison to the laborers in other sectors of the political economy, and no evidence of decline in their status had been reported. They, too, joined in the revolution. Surprisingly, in 1978 Ansari, the head of NIOC, volunteered to meet their economic demands, but they refused, calling instead for abolition of SAVAK, deportation of foreign technicians, release of political prisoners, and an end to martial law. (See section VI-3.) These along

with other demands clearly constitute political demand.³¹ What is the relation of the reversal hypothesis to these trends of thought?

Furthermore, the regime simply failed to develop productive agriculture; it also failed to create a viable industrial base, and the socioeconomic change was uneven and inadequate to meet the demands of the society. The Iranian Revolution was a response by the classes who realized that their further socioeconomic development was blocked by the system.³² The regime was obsolete or what the Iranian intelligentsia rightly labeled as anachronistic. It was not only an anachronism, but an illegitimate monarchy assuming power illegally through aggression.³³ The new forces the middle and laboring classes created by social change in Iran were certainly incompatible with the institution of monarchism, which belonged in a museum. The monarchy was inconsistent with modern political thought and change as a whole and impeded the socioeconomic and political advancement of the emerging classes. The latter developed to the point that the prevailing anachronistic structure could no longer contain them.

The resulting conflict between the two, along with other structural factors, played a critical role in mobilizing a popular revolution from below. In fact, most of the animosity and hatred of the system came from those who had not benefited from oil. Hence, it was not those frustrated consumers who, as the J-curve asserts, made a revolution in Iran, but those who did not have a considerable share in the wealth of their own country. It was, therefore, socioeconomic and political contradictions along with uneven development rather than decline after

improvement that instigated the revolution in Iran.³⁴ (These factors are discussed in Part 3, section VI-4.)

Despite this, it is not true that the reversal hypothesis as an indicator in explaining violence has no validity. Empirical evidence from Iran supports the partial explanatory capacity of this variable so far as violence is concerned. Certainly, in Iran there was both development and decline. In reality, it stands to reason that transition from improvement to decline and from boom to recession can involve a sharply antagonistic reaction from the forces affected. Farhad Kazemi and the empirical studies of other scholars of Iran and other Middle Eastern countries lend support to this argument. On the whole, their findings, though they employ reinforcing variables such as GNP, per capita income, the balance of payments, and the cost of living index in addition to Davies' reversal trend, show that the linkage between political violence and those indicators is only partial.³⁵

The basic theoretical problem with the J-curve formulation is that it does not explain the difference between violence and revolution. That is why the theory ends up with a wrong classificatory scheme. For instance, it puts the civil rights movement in the United States and the October Revolution of 1917 into the same category. It is perhaps due to this theoretical confusion that the same causal factors lead to different conclusions. Again, the Iranian case supports this argument. For instance, in 1959, Iran witnessed a trade surplus, oil revenues increased, the private sector expanded, and foreign aid, grants, and loans created grounds for a degree of capitalistic development. According to R. E. Looney, massive expenditures by government and the extensive offering of credit to the

private sector culminated in what he calls the country's first economic boom.³⁶ The growth took place basically in the urban housing industry and in construction projects. The investment in construction in the capital, Tehran, rose by 85 percent in 1957 and by 130 percent in 1959. This boom soon ended, however, due largely to inflating prices and expanding balance of payments deficits. In order to cope with this problem, the government imposed restrictions on imports, cut back governmental expenditures and social services, raised interest rates, and restricted credit to private sectors. These policies helped transform the 1957-1960 boom into a depression which drastically affected domestic trade and the agriculture and construction sectors. The economy of the bazar suffered severely from the credit restrictions as well as from the recession. These problems, along with high inflation and unemployment, created socioeconomic and political instability.³⁷

The resulting situation is, based on J-curve analysis, a sharp reversal or a decline after improvement. The theory seems to be very relevant here. For the reversal of 1960-1962, in fact, tended to play a crucial role in activating a revolutionary movement against the Iranian regime. Yet it is believed that this "reversal" could not and would not, by itself, have resulted in the 1962-1963 movement. The organizational, structural, and political factors, along with clashing class interests, probably played a more important role than did the reversal hypothesis in this uprising.³⁸ Even if we assign the primary role to the reversal variable, it still fails to answer the key theoretical and empirical questions. Why, given the fact that the causes and conditions in the pre-1963 and 1978-1979

uprisings were similar and in accord with the J-curve analysis, was the former aborted but the latter resulted in a mass-based revolution from below?

In actuality, in both cases, no matter how uneven, inegalitarian, and contradictory the development was, the country experienced some improvement. In both cases, the boom had triggered expansion in all service sectors. In both cases, prior to political disturbances, the improvement was followed by decline. One wonders, then why these similar causes led to two different conclusions. Moreover, if reversal-inducing factors, such as insecurity, fear, and discontent, are supposed to result in revolution, as the theory claims, then the Western capitalist formations might all have erupted in revolution, for these variables are the basic characteristics of all oligarchies. Job insecurity and massive layoffs always tend, like the fearful shadow of death, to accompany the masses of the laboring classes from all walks of life. Actually, the intellectuals and other forces are no exception to this rule. Hence, the fear of losing one's job or status is never absent. And empirically there are and have always been massive layoffs and fear of losing what one possesses in these formations. This analysis, therefore, is consistent with Davies' formulation that reversal-activating variables tend to cause the people to fear "that they may lose what they have already achieved."³⁹ And this perception, in turn, leads individuals to violent outlets.

Capitalist formations, accompanied by tensions, fears, and insecurity, seem to be more stable and integrated. Why then do these formations not experience revolution but Iran did? The answer is clearly related to the structural features of a social formation about which the theory has nothing to say. For

instance, in capitalist societies, capital is developed to the point that it enables the state to tolerate its opponents and democratic tendencies which tend to oppose it. Therefore, it is easy for those formations to contain political class struggle and balance the oppositional persuasions. But situations like Iran, that was not the case. Capital, along with capitalist institutions, were weak, and the state itself was a weaker link in the chain of the metropolis, the contradictions of which had resulted in the undemocratic domination of the democracy-desiring forces by an authoritarian dictatorship. In order to sustain itself, such a formation has no alternative but to eliminate the democratic rights of the social forces. And this means political repression, which, in turn, may, if accompanied by other structural contradictions, result in revolution.⁴⁰ Davies' theory fails to incorporate structural contradiction into its frame of analysis.

Nonetheless, it is true that the superboom in Iran inflated aspirations, but the governmental incapacitation to meet those expectations led to the frustration of discontented forces. This trend was further aggravated by the 1974-1975 recession in the advanced capitalist countries.⁴¹ The demands for oil declined, which led to a 20 percent decline in Iranian production by the end of 1975. And, for all of 1976, production was down 12 percent per day. Consequently, oil revenues were reduced. In 1977, the country began borrowing again from the metropolis, which forced the revision of a number of budgets: some contracts were cancelled, some programs abandoned and explosive governmental expenditures, with the exception of defense were cut back.⁴² The J-curve is relevant here, for it attributes the occurrence of revolution to the frustration which results from a decline

in achievement after a long period of improvement. There is no doubt that the Iranian government, being the ultimate source of need satisfaction, frustrated the realization of rising expectations brought to bear on it. But there is not a single item of empirical evidence to show that frustration can lead to revolution. It may either result in passivity or lead to violence, and violence should be distinguished from revolution because they are two different concepts.

Davies' theory seeks the cause of revolution only in a dissatisfied state of mind, in other words, in the intolerable gap between what people want and what they get. This is, however, a kind of psychological determinism. Even though dissatisfaction can be a good reason for revolutionary upheaval, it cannot by itself be the most important factor. Rather, political factors such as the emergence of charismatic leadership and effective vanguard organization, are important causal variables. As we know, mosques played a destiny-making role in the mass mobilization in Iran and the transformation of grievances into a generalized criticism of Pahlavi despotism. Moreover, Imam Khomeini's charismatic and spiritual appeal to the masses and his effective political leadership and organizational capacity were critical catalysts of the Iranian Revolution. In reality, it was his capability of mobilizing the masses that organized popular discontent into political action, thereby preventing the forces of dissatisfaction and discontent from disintegrating.⁴³ Without these political factors, which Davies' theory clearly underestimates, how was it possible in the light of the nature of state despotism that the liberation of oppressed Iranians who had been forced into blind obedience was realized. Many Iranians, particularly the middle-class intelligentsia, politically

speaking, were alienated. They wanted to realize their personal identity. They intended to alter the prevailing negativity, that is, lack of freedom, and to realize their recognition as independent, conscious human beings. They existed other than they were, they lived in conditions of constant alienation, and sometimes they felt, as reflected in poetry, that they were nothing.⁴⁴

Any theory or any school of thought that ignores this contradiction is indeed an inaccurate formulation. Davies' theory actually excludes these factors and, therefore, it is faulty logic. In addition, the J-curve model has little to say about the structural causes of a revolution, which, as analyzed earlier, played a critical role in the Iranian Revolution. Further, as his second assumption indicates, objective considerations are held to be less important than the individual's "state of mind." The theory clearly fails to explain how a revolutionary mental state can inform action sufficient to overthrow the dominant system. Besides, liberty and equality are important defining variables in a revolutionary situation. And the struggle for the acquisition of these political goals is empirically validated. All political theorists, from Aristotle on, have emphasized the crucial importance of these variables. Yet in Davies' theory they are given little, if any, value.

In short, the reversal thesis suffers from a major theoretical problem: it does not make a distinction between a social revolution and violence. It is simply a distortion of scholarship to classify, as this thesis does, the Great October Revolution of 1917 with Dorr's Rebellion of 1842 and the black movement of the 1960s in the United States in the same category. Did the latter two movements abolish ownership of the means of production? Did they alter class and political

structures in American society? Did they replace capitalistic structures with a desired mode of production? Empirical, historical, and factual realities demand an emphatic no. While the Great October Revolution resulted in massive transformation of sociopolitical structures, the other two did not. Hence, these movements should be analytically differentiated if we want to formulate an explanatory theory of revolution. Moreover, Davies' theory fails to answer another important theoretical question: why one movement leads to the occurrence of a social revolution while another fails to go beyond a rebellious stage. Hence, the empirical validity of the J-curve model lies in its capacity to explain violence and not revolution.⁴⁵

ENDNOTES

¹Rod Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," Theory and Society 8 (1979):39-99.

²Walter L. Goldfrank, "Theories of Revolution and Revolution without Theory," Theory and Society 7 (March 1979):135-67.

³Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," p. 51. See also Emile Durkheim, Suicide (New York: Free Press, 1951), p. 253; Neil J. Smelser, "Toward a Theory of Modernization," in Essays in Sociological Explanation (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978), p. 141.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," pp. 50-52.

⁶James C. Davies (1962), Ted Robert Garr (1973), Ivo Feierabend and Rosalind Feierabend (1972); Feierabend and Nesvold (1969, 1973) are the leading proponents of the psychological model. Davies and Garr are believed to have formulated persuasive models of political violence and revolution emanating from the psyche of the people. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," in When Men Revolt and Why ed. J. C. Davies, (New York: Free Press, 1971), pp. 134-48; idem, American Sociological Reviews 27 (February 1962):5-19; Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970). Gurr's work is especially impressive, and his emphasis on the assumption that discontent is the root cause of political conflict is an intellectually valuable premise (ibid. p. 364)

⁷Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," p. 388

⁸Davies, "The J-Curve of Rising and Declining Satisfaction as a Cause of Some Great Revolutions and a Contained Rebellion," in Violence in America, ed. Ted Robert Gurr and Hugh David Graham (New York: Bantam Books, 1969), p. 690. See also idem, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," pp. 134-48.

⁹Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," p. 136.

¹⁰P. 690, note 8. In Davies' view, the socioeconomic development is less important than the expectations. People may fear that "past progress, now blocked" may go on. Anxiety, emanating from this type of undue concern or fright, may then make the resort to revolt likely; see ibid., p. 136.

¹¹Davies, "J-Curve," pp. 690-691.

¹²Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," pp. 137-43.

¹³William Zartman, James A. Paul, and John P. Entelis, "An Economic Indicator of Socipolitical Unrest," International Journal of Middle East Studies 2 (October 1971):293-309. In this connection, an excellent analysis is advanced by Mark Kesselman, "Political Development as Ideology," World Politics 36 (October 1973):139-54.

¹⁴Leon Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977), pp. 22-23. See also, for a creative analysis on this account, Michael Lowy, The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development: The Theory of Permanent Revolution (London: Verso, 198), chapter 3; for an excellent analysis in this respect, see Ernest Mandel, Trotsky, a Study in the Dynamic of His Thought (London: NLB, 1979), pp. 22-31.

¹⁵Ibid., Trotsky, pp. 22-23.

¹⁶See Homa Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, 1926-1979 (New York: New York University Press, 1981), pp. 322-331.

¹⁷James Petras, "Reflections on the Iranian Revolution," in Capitalist and Socialist Crises in the Late Twentieth Century, ed. James F. Petras et. als. (New Jersey.: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983), pp. 288-295; on migration issues, see Farhad Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution in Iran, the Migrant Poor, Urban Marginality and Politics (New York: New York University Press, 1980), chapter 3, pp. 97-111.

¹⁸Paul Sweezy and Harry Magdoff, "Iran: The New Crisis of American Hegemony," MRP 30:9 (February 1979):1-25.

¹⁹Texas' experience of economic hardship is perfectly compatible with J-curve formulation. Being probably the richest state in the Union and having long prospered from the oil boom that began in 1973 as a result of increased oil prices in the Middle East, Texas seemed a major success story to other states in the U.S. Now Texas, like Middle Eastern countries, faces a drastic decline in oil prices. Based on a report in the Daily Texan of 180 banks that have declared bankruptcy in the United States this year, 18 are in Texas. Many workers are being laid off. Job insecurity is prevalent. Social and educational cuts have affected the middle and lower classes. Tuition at state universities has tripled, but no improvement has taken place. Library hours have shortened. Curtailed social programs in the face of an incredible budget deficit have become the order of the day. Texans, after years of prosperity and high socioeconomic status, are now confronted with a decline phenomenon. On the basis of reversal thesis, a revolution should have taken place in Texas. Surprisingly, not even a mild protest has occurred.

All oil-producing countries are now confronted with economic decline. After a decade of boom and higher prices, declining oil prices now hurt them drastically. If the decline thesis holds, then the oil-producing Arab countries in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular, should all have exploded in revolution. But such a prospect is not in sight.

²⁰Ali-Riza Nobari (ed.), Iran Erupts (Stanford University: Iran-American Documentation Group, 1978), pp. 29-32.

²¹According to Farhad Kazemi and Robert Looney, "a downward turn of the economy does not affect the whole population equally." The burden of economic hardship may be shouldered by a class which does not have collective organizational capacity to translate its discontent into political action. Moreover, in their view, the intensity of violence depends very much upon the accommodation capacity of the government and the degree of its permissiveness. If the regime does have a legitimate political base, then the measures taken by it to cure societal ills will be welcomed by the majority and this will, in turn, stem the tide of political violence. Political factors may also result in violence. In the Iranian case, for example, as Kazemi correctly argues, the 1956 tribal clashes with the central government were associated with purely political rather than economic variables. The case of the Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan in 1940 further supports the political argument. See Kazemi, "Economic Indicators and Political Violence in Iran, 1946-1968," Iranian Studies 8 (1975):70-87; Looney, Economic Origins, pp. 256-57.

²²See M. H. Pesaran and F. Gahvary, "Growth and Income Distribution in Iran," in Richard Stone and William Peterson (eds.), Econometric Contribution to Public Policy (International Economic Association, 1978), pp. 231-49. See also Manoucher Parvin and Amir N. Zamani, "Political Economy of Growth and Destruction: A Statistical Interpretation of the Iranian Case," Iranian Studies 12 (Winter-Spring 1979):43-77. See also Ervand Abrahamian, "Structural Causes of the Iranian Revolution," MERIP Reports 87 (May 1980):21-26.

²³Pesaran and Gahvary, "Growth and Income".

²⁴See Michael P. Todaro, Economic Development in the Third World (New York: Longman, 1977), p. 102. The Gini Index is a measure which shows how equal/inequal a given distribution of income is. Absolute inequality is defined as zero, and perfect equality as one. The Gini coefficient for societies which are highly inegalitarian in terms of income distribution lies between 0.50 and 0.70, while for countries with relatively equitable distributions, it is on the order of 0.20 to 0.35. In applying Gini coefficients to Iran, see Farhad Mehran, Income Distribution in Iran: The Statistics of Inequality (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1975), pp. 1-2.

²⁵See Farhad Mehran, "Income Distribution in Iran: The Statistics of Inequality," ILO (October, 1979):1-2.

²⁶Pesaran and Gahvary, "Growth and Income", p. 237.

²⁷Parvin and Zamani, "Political Economy of Growth and Destruction", 45.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 46-47.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 49-50.

³⁰This study is not trying to say who got what, but rather, by utilizing these comparative statistical analyses, to show that the decline-after-improvement thesis is simply not applicable to all classes. As the findings indicate, the upper class was making millions and its socioeconomic status never declined. The socioeconomic status of the middle and lower classes was declining. This is most certainly a characteristic of a class society and has nothing to do with Davies' formulation. For a complementary note, see Parvin and Zamani, "Political Economy of Growth and Destruction," p. 50; and F. Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 167.

³¹See Assef Bayat, Workers and Revolution in Iran (London: Zed Books, 1987), pp. 80-81.

³²Fred Halliday, "Iran: The Economic Contradictions," MERIP Report 8 (July-August 1978):9-10.

³³See Ervand Abrahamian, "Iran: The Political Challenge," MERIP Report 8 (July-August 1978):3-7.

³⁴Robert C. Tucker, The Marxian Revolutionary Idea (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1979). According to Marx, the goal of a revolutionary class is not to achieve material satisfaction in the struggle to overthrow the established social formation. What is fundamentally important throughout the class struggle and historical development is not to satisfy consumptionist demands, but to meet the production interests. Hence, it is not frustrated consumers who make a revolution, but frustrated producers who want to freely develop productive facilities and creative potentialities (pp. 17-18.)

³⁵Zartman, Paul, and Entelis, "Economic Indicator," p. 301; Farhad Kazemi, "Economic Indicators and Political Violence in Iran, 1946-1968," Iranian Studies 8 (1975):70-86.

³⁶See Robert E. Looney, Economic Origins of the Iranian Revolution (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p. 14. See also Thomas Walton, "Economic

Development and Revolutionary Upheaval in Iran," in Cambridge Journal of Economics 4 (1980):271-92.

³⁷Looney, Economic Origins, p. 17.

³⁸Walton, "Economic Development," pp. 278-279; Looney, Economic Origins, p. 21.

³⁹Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," p. 136.

⁴⁰See Assef Bayat, Workers and Revolution in Iran, pp. 197-201.

⁴¹See Ernest Mandel, The Second Slump (London: Verso, 1980), chapter one, especially "The Scope of the 1974-1975 Recession," pp. 14-21.

⁴²Sweezy and Magdoff, "Iran: The New Crisis of American Hegemony," p. 11.

⁴³Leon Trotsky, The History of the Russian Revolution (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977). Trotsky strongly supports party organization and thinks that without a party to organize the discontented individuals into political action, discontent will be like steam without a piston; it will dissipate.

⁴⁴See James A. Bill, The Politics of Iran (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill., 1972), p. 90. See also Halliday, "Iran," pp. 223-24. For an original source on this account, see Sadegh Hedayat, The Blind Owl (New York: Grove Press, 1969). The entire book is an analysis of alienation. It seeks to find a relief in oblivion brought about by alcohol and artificial sleep induced by drugs.

⁴⁵See Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," pp. 39-99.

CHAPTER II

THE RELATIVE-DEPRIVATION MODEL

Ted Gurr's theory, like J-curve analysis, fails before empirical case studies of revolution such as the Iranian experience. In this theoretical approach, "Relative Deprivation" (RD) is the crucial variable explaining political violence. It is defined as the "actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities. Value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled. Value capabilities are the goods and conditions of life they think they are capable of getting and keeping."¹

There are three forms of relative deprivation: Decremental Deprivation (DD), in which "value expectations remain relatively constant, but value capabilities are perceived to decline"; Aspiration Deprivation (AD), which takes place when the group's "capabilities remain relatively static while expectations increase or intensify"; and Progressive Deprivation (PD), where a group's value capabilities decline while their expectations rise.² The relevance of only the first and second models will be discussed. The third overlaps Davies' theory.

Gurr's theoretical departure includes the thesis that RD is a critical defining variable. It occurs where there is either a decline in what people get or an increase in what they think they deserve. In consequence, they become angry, and, if enough of them do not acquire what they feel they should receive, their potential for collective violent behavior and internal war increases.³ According to him, collective violence is determined by the frustration-aggression mechanism. The anger stimulated by frustration is a motivating force that impels people to

aggression. The primary causal sequence involves "first, the development of discontent; second, the politicization of that discontent; and finally its actualization in violent action against political objects and actors."⁴ Therefore, discontent, induced by the perception of RD, is the basic instigative impulse of collective violence. Hence, the greater the intensity of the discontent, the more likely is the occurrence of violence.

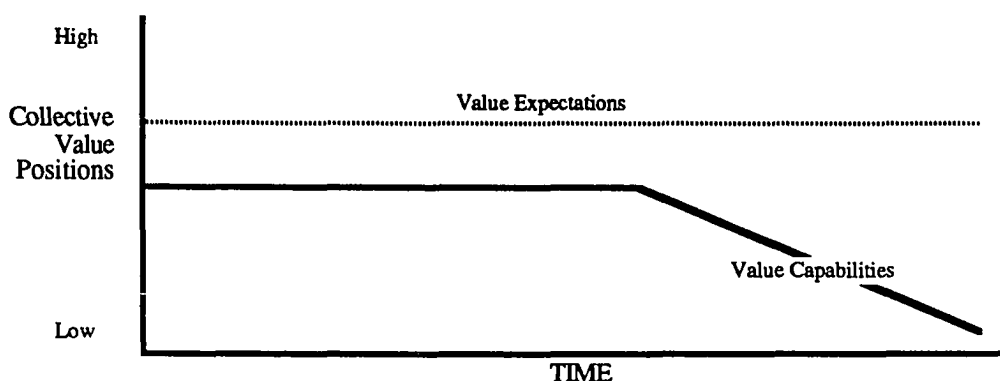
Decremental and Aspiration Deprivation and the Iranian Revolution

As Gurr's first generalization shows (see figure 1), the group's expectations have changed little over time. In other words, expectations have remained constant, but value capabilities have declined substantially. When this happens, that is to say, as soon as people begin to realize that they might lose what they have or feel they could have, they became angry and experience relative deprivation.⁵

On the basis of this model, it can be assumed that the collective value expectations of social classes in Iran (ulama, bazaris, the middle-class intelligentsia, and the working class, in general) had remained relatively constant, while the collective value capabilities of these classes had declined. Let's test the validity of this hypothesis. According to the regime in domination, the assertion is that the reduction of the state's annual payments to the clergy,⁶ and more important, the introduction of land reform, which deprived the ulama of private ownership, induced tension.⁷ This in turn, with respect to the model, stimulated frustrations when this group anticipated losing what it once had.

What can be inferred from this thesis is that the theory of land reform and the financial motivation inflicted decremental deprivation on this group. This is, however, a generalization that does not hold up when subjected to historical and empirical scrutiny. In actuality, with the exception of religious corps (Sipah-i Din), which, like literacy corps (Sipah-i Danish), received a partial monthly payment from the government, the vast majority of Shi'i ulama did not receive any payments from the system. Even if it is taken for granted that some of them obtained subsidies from the regime, the reduction of that subsidy cannot radically inform a revolutionary political action, basically because all religious groups were not drastically affected by the change. In addition, the clergy and religious affairs were supported financially by the true Muslim believers. They received donations and sanctioned religious taxes (khoms, zakat) from their followers. In fact, the generous financial contributions made by the bazari class to religious establishments exceeded the limited governmental financial support of the religious institutions. Endowments constituted another source of income attached to mosques and religious educational institutions. As a matter of fact, this class, in respect of generous financial support from its followers, did not need to worry about any revenue reduction. Hence, resentment emanating from the governmental squeezing of clerical funds could not be a basic instigating factor in the politicization of the revolutionary mass movement in Iran.⁸

Figure 5: Decremental Deprivation



Source: Ted R. Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 47

In inquiring into the reaction to the land reform bill formulated in late 1959, it should be emphasized that the ulamas were not united in their opposition to land reform.⁹ Whereas some opposed the reform bill, others favored it. A leading mujtahid even favored the distribution of vaqf (endowment) lands to the peasants, as well as the lands held by landowners. In reality, the radical religious class, as a whole, was critical of the existing unjust land tenure system and supported redistribution. This class sharply condemned those who utilized the religious tradition which maintained, "al-nas musallitun ala amwalihim" ("people are sovereign over their own property").¹⁰ According to this class, this was no more than a religious excuse devised by the owners to defend their usurped holdings, which were not in any way the product of the application of their labors to land. Yet conservatives were not only against the land reform and the extension of the right to vote to women, but also against the uncontested hegemony of the Shah.

On the other hand, the moderate and radical faction of the ulama were not opposed to the spirit of the land reform or to reform programs.¹¹

One study indicates that the program of land distribution did not include religious ownership at all. For instance, prior to land reform, there were 2.4 million hectares of land belonging to religious institutions. After the reform, it remained the same.¹² Another extensively documented analysis also lends support to the assertion that the land reform alone did not give rise to disturbances. A. K. S. Lambton has this to say:

The disturbances were subsequently alleged to have been stirred up by the opponents of land reform and women's suffrage. They no doubt had a finger in the pie, but it would be an oversimplification of the issue to attribute the disturbances.... to them.... unless there had been.... a feeling that injustice (zulm) had passed all reasonable bounds, it is unlikely that the protest would have taken the form it did. What is interesting is the extent to which political opposition still tends to manifest itself in religious guise.¹³

In addition, land reform, as Nikki Keddie argues, "was a less radical attack on the ulama than many measures by Reza Shah."¹⁴ In 1939, for example, Reza Shah ordered the state to take over all religious lands and waqfs as well. Consequently, the ulama lost much of their socioeconomic and political powers at the time.¹⁵ The Shah's dramatic and radically secular reforms shocked even the British. Great Britain's Foreign Ministry had this to say:

The Shah, in destroying the power of the Mullas, has forgotten Napoleon's adage that the chief purpose of religion is to prevent the poor from murdering the rich. There is now

nothing to replace religion, save an artificial nationalism which might well die with the Shah, leaving behind anarchy.¹⁶

In the situation that resulted, the ulama lost some control and possession of waqf lands as well as sociopolitical power in Iran, a clear manifestation of relative deprivation indeed. On the basis of the decremental deprivation model, then, those frustrating factors might have resulted in a violent political movement. But, they did not. Hence, one wonders why the revolution did not occur under Reza Shah, but under his son.

Furthermore, the ulamas' RD was probably more marked under Reza Shah than under his son. The most radical, secular, and modern reform programs were implemented by Reza Shah. For instance, in the early twentieth century, welfare programs and educational institutions were mostly dominated by the ulama and were run by them. But under Reza Shah this changed. He ordered the adoption of Western-style civilization. He adopted Western civil codes, provided for the attainment of secular public education throughout the country, and created Western-style court systems. Boys and girls began to attend coeducational institutions and were given jobs without discrimination according to sex. He also ordered the state to take over the administration of welfare institutions. He imposed Western-type dress, first on men, and then, in 1939, on women. What is more, he outlawed the traditional veiling system, which is the most sensitive aspect of the Islamic social and religious culture. Veiling, in fact, determines the dignity and grace of a female believer in Islam. For believers, life without veiling is void of any virtue, and a virtuous, non-Western-oriented woman is one who is willingly

dedicated to this cause. Yet, Reza Shah's gendarmes, in spite of the sanctity of the veil in Islam, tore it off on sight. He forced the ulama, who wished to wear Islamic dress, to take and pass competency tests before they were allowed to put on Islamic costumes and obey Islamic laws. This governmental intrusion into the religious sphere compelled concerned believers to lock themselves away until Reza Shah abdicated in 1941 because his response to any opposition to un-Islamic practices was harsh and brutal.¹⁷

What the late dethroned Shah did was to extend his father's reform programs. He initiated a land reform, voting rights for women (though the latter was only a symbolic action, since there was never a free election under the Pahlavi dynasty), the Family Protection Act (FPA), and a literacy corps, for example. Yet reform programs were primarily designed to withstand the opposition of the middle-class intelligentsia and professionals. They thus did not have much negative impact on the sociopolitical status of the ulama.

If it was the perception of RD on the part of the ulama and other social classes that led to the revolutionary transformation of Iranian society in 1978-1979, why did this felt deprivation not result in a revolutionary movement under Reza Shah? The fact is that the Shah's reform programs did not undermine the social status of the ulama as much as his father's did.¹⁸ To admit RD as a critical defining variable is to exclude the objective historical development of societies. Revolution is not an isolated phenomenon, nor is it an incident only of violence. It is a class-based movement which develops out of objective structural contradictions. It often occurs within societies which are inherently conflict-ridden. Hence, it is a mistake

to rely on RD as a theoretical analytical tool. If RD is so crucial a factor in defining the revolution, then why did it fail miserably to transform Khomeini's upheaval of June 1963 into a full-fledged revolution? The fact is that this model suffers from a theoretical problem: it fails to differentiate violence from revolution. As our empirical analysis proves, the psychological approach explains violence but not revolution.

There are additional proofs that the decremental RD model fails to explain the Iranian Revolution. Shi'ism is associated with a tradition of struggle and martyrdom. Historically, it has never surrendered to injustice. It is inspired by Imam Hossein's bloody uprising against Yazid. Thus, this approach does not explain the mounting tide of the Shi'i historical political struggle or the organizational capacity and the pervasive influence of the ulama within the poor classes and bazar community. The struggle of Shi'i political thought in Iran is not really a new phenomenon. It is certainly associated with sacrifice, resistance to injustice, and the opposition to subjection, domination, exploitation, and oppression.¹⁹ This tradition, therefore, has little to do with the deprivation/frustration syndrome. Radical movements, in fact, specifically with the expansion and infiltration of capitalist, imperialist hegemony to Iran, have always been the basic feature of Iranian political thought. It can be asserted that Islam, throughout the history of imperialist domination in Iran, has supported in one way or another class struggle.²⁰

In this context, the ulamas' struggle, along with other social classes in Iran, against foreign domination and monopolistic concessionaries lends empirical

support to our assertion. For instance, in all the following resistance movements-- movements against Baron Julius du Reuter, who was granted by the ruling class a fifty-year monopoly concession on all the mining and communication resources of the country in 1872; a tobacco concession given to a British company in 1891-1892; an oil concession granted to a British subject, William Knox D'Arcy, in 1901; constitutional movement of 1905-1906; the Jangal Revolution of 1919-1921; Mosaddegh's movement of 1951-1953; and finally, Khomeini's uprising in 1963-- on the side of the regime stood the army, the privileged class, and Western oligarchies. And on the side of the opposition stood progressive ulamas, nationalistic forces, and leftist tendencies.²¹ Actually, in all these movements, the ulama played a key role in mobilizing and organizing class alliance against the ruling classes and, through them, foreign domination and monopolist concessionaries. Since the detailed analysis of all these movements constitutes an independent research, it is not possible, for organizational reasons, to go into them here. Nonetheless, political struggle against exploitive foreign domination from the time of capitalistic penetration into Iran forms the basic feature of Iranian political history.²²

Assume for a moment that foreign domination and exploitation frustrated socioeconomic and political forces in Iran, and that these classes fought back to relieve their frustration-inducing grievances. Assign for analytical purposes a positive functional role to the RD formulation and propose that RD, followed by external domination/humiliation, instigated the above-mentioned movements. Here, the key question which immediately can be posed is that if frustration-

activated politicized discontent is a precondition, as the theory maintains, to the occurrence of a revolution, why did these movements in Iran not result in a revolution? It is known that all of these historical epochal struggles involved the feelings of frustration and deprivation. The social forces in Iran had conceived the threat as very serious. They had realized that they were to lose what they possessed. For example, they were to lose their country to competing imperial forces. On the basis of a plot in 1907 called the Anglo-Russian Treaty, these freedom-loving imperial formations were to take over Iran and divide it between themselves.²³ The intensity of deep-rooted frustration might have thus been quite comprehensible; but despite the fact that all theoretical prerequisites of RD were satisfied in the aforementioned movements, a full-fledged revolution did not take place. What did occur was the British-instigated coup in 1921 that brought to power a "sergeant-turned-colonel," Reza Khan, who sealed the fate of all political actions and radicalism in Iran.

It was under the leadership of this newly emerged order that the Qajar dynasty was deposed. In 1926, Reza Khan crowned himself King of Iran, establishing the Pahlavi regime. He created a modern military institution which enabled him to embark upon extensive centralized political control. Under this regime all political persuasions were eradicated, political freedom was banned, the constitution was shelved, and trade unions were abolished. Even more surprisingly, the workers' identity was denied them; that is, the usage of the concept of "worker" or "proletariat" was prohibited. However, this new antirevolutionary order greatly appealed to the imperialist forces, especially the

British, who ironically still defines its despotic-generating role as a dedication to the maintenance of the so called free world. It provided protection for British imperial interests in Iran, though, in the 1930s, it began to side with Fascism.²⁴ The latter, too, through its ideological and militaristic support, made great contributions to the strength of militarization and centralization in Iran. The formulation of a centralized military regime set the stage for imperialist political and economic interventionism. However, this intervention, supported by internal reactionary ruling classes, greatly affected the course of political developmentalism in Iran during this critical period.²⁵

Subjectivism and subordination under this regime became the order of the day. Both the intelligentsia and the working class were subjected to the arbitrary will of the system. Although the peasantry and tribal forces were systematically excluded from the benefits of reform programs and subjected to socioeconomic exploitation and political domination, the newly emerging middle class, too, suffered from arbitrary acts, exploitation, and the culture of personalism imposed on them. Indeed, the system instilled in them feelings of terror, anxiety, distrust, political cynicism, and alienation.

The lower classes shouldered the burden of capital accumulation and economic exploitation. State monopoly of production and control of price policies, along with increasing inflation, drastically affected them. Unevenness in distribution of rewards and social goods culminated in an expanding gap between the landed feudal lords and the laboring class, especially peasants and tribesmen. Hence, the landed class, the new ruling class, got rich and the poor got victimized.

The Shah's authoritarian policies systematically antagonized the social classes. More important, they effectively and brutally broke down the resistance of the ulama, reduced their social status, and eradicated their socioeconomic and political power. This class was forced to accept temporal rule and was tightly controlled. The newly created working class and the middle-class intelligentsia were subordinated either by terror or by co-optation.

It follows from this analysis that the theoretical prerequisites of decremental relative deprivation under Reza Shah were met. All social classes were frustrated and alienated. The ulama remained extremely hostile to the regime. The socioeconomic and political power of all these classes, especially the ulama, declined. They were unable to realize cultural and economic aspirations and were denied political participation. They felt they had lost what they had and were incapable of attaining what they desired. This condition was further aggravated by the invasion of Iran and its occupation by Allied Forces (the Soviet Union, Britain, and the United States). The country was totally humiliated and nationalism frustrated. Yet the Shah was not overthrown by a revolution.

In reality, the RD model fails to consider the intrusion variables from the external environment. Since it lacks a class focus, the theory is unable to explain historical development which is closely associated with political struggle. The explanatory capacity of this theory, insofar as historical and political analysis is concerned, is so limited that it essentially ignores the structural determination of political action. Moreover, it does not have anything to say about the structural contradictions of capitalistic formations, which make great contributions to the

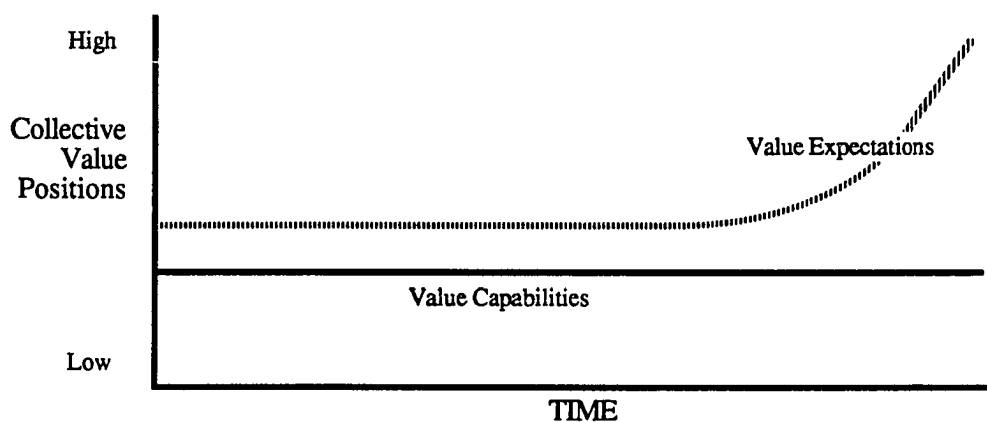
explosion of class-determined revolutions from below. It is due to these defects that the theory fails to explain why, despite the existence of tension-activating factors under Reza Shah called for by the RD formulation, the breakdown of his despotism was realized by foreign forces and not by an internal revolution.

Seen in this light, the utility of the decremental relative deprivation model is inadequate to explain the Iranian case. The model fails to answer "why" questions. As is clear from the foregoing discussion, all of the movements mentioned earlier were generated by a systemic frustration -foreign sociopolitical and economic domination, Western penetration, cultural contradictions, foreign invasion of the country- all of which humiliated and discredited the Iranians, and, above all, by the perceived threat of the loss of national and cultural identity. All these factors exacerbated the RD of the different social classes. One wonders why the earlier movements did not lead to radical transformation of the Iranian system, but that of 1978-1979 did. What is the relation of this model to the politically motivated struggle of a people who sought a society in which they would be free from internal oppression and external domination? How can it explain the loyalty of the oppressed poor to Islamic ideals? The fact is that the theory fails to meet these challenges.

Nonetheless, contrary to the first model, which maintains that a group is frightened by the thought of losing what it has, the aspirational RD model suggests that the inability of the group to satisfy rising expectations leads to frustration and anger. An increase in value expectations (which is caused by exposure to a better standard of life),²⁶ leads to greater demands for material

goods, social justice, political participation, equality, and so on. It is, in fact, logical to argue that the demands for these goods were prevalent in Iran. But the expectations of the lower classes were repressed and according to this model, such repression results in violence (see Figure 2).

Figure 6: Aspirational Deprivation



Source: Gurr, Why Men Rebel, p. 51.

The strength of the hypothesis lies in this assertion. Freedom in the sense of being independent constitutes the essence of man. This means not to be exploited, oppressed, humiliated, and alienated, to be able to employ one's own power and relate oneself productively to others, to have a society wherein to be free to develop one's own faculties and potentialities to the fullest. In Iran, there existed no responsible political debate, no possibility of self-expression, no meaningful dialogue on social problems. Social justice was lacking, political participation was

nonexistent, equality was wishful thinking, the ruler himself was not independent, let alone the ruled.

For instance, the invasion of Iran by the Allied Forces led to the abdication of the incumbent dictator in 1941 and his replacement by the second Shah, that is, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. As one Iranian analyst argues, those agents who "had put him in put him on a train out of the country and then onto a ship, namely the British. On this occasion, they were aided by the Americans and the Russians."²⁷ Once again, history witnessed the rise of the opportunistic upper classes, that is, landlords, lumpans, tribal khans, a comprador bourgeoisie, army generals, and appointed high-level bureaucrats, all with the prior approval and assistance of colonial forces. In this period, Iranian politics were dominated and determined by the British.

The second Shah defined the transition in this manner. "It was deemed appropriate by the Allies that I should succeed my father."²⁸ This further proves that Iran lacked independence and autonomy. The new Shah's mission was perceived as no more than the preservation of his masters' desire for continued political domination and economic exploitation.²⁹ Hence, emancipation from and eradication of foreign dominance in Iran was highly desired by the nationalistic forces. But, unfortunately, independent democratic rights along with the above-mentioned political goods, which were in urgent demand by the alienated Iranians, were scarce in Iranian society. All these factors constituted major stumbling blocks to the realization of human freedom; hence, frustration, emanating from the fatal

gap between felt needs and desired satisfactions, was potentially realizable as violence.

Yet, violence may not culminate in a class-determined political action. This too can be proved empirically. For instance, the blacks in the United States were discriminated against, suffered severely from racism, and were unequal. Their demands for social justice, equality, participation, liberty, political rights, and so on, were strong, but their capability to achieve these political goals was blocked by the dominant white class. Consequently, violence erupted and resulted in the achievement of civil rights for this group. Or take minority movements in Iran. As mentioned earlier, Reza Shah's removal, which came about as a result of interventionism and foreign occupation in 1941, led to the development of new political life, a free press and trade unions, and the growth of new social forces that started challenging the undemocratic features of Iranian politics and foreign interventionism. These along with socioeconomic problems activated the organization of oppositional movements. These movements were organized by radical, antforeign nationalist, socialist, and communist elements. The political action taken in the period ranged from mass strikes against the foreign domination of Iran's oil, to the establishment of the socialist republics of Kurdistan and Azerbaijan in 1945-1946.³⁰ Yet, these movements did not result in national liberation politics. In 1953, these movements were crushed and the regional and cultural autonomy of the two republics collapsed with the withdrawal of the Red Army in 1946.

In both cases, the movements resulted in a degree of autonomy and achievement of universal rights rather than in a revolutionary transformation of sociopolitical and economic relations. The theory fails to tell us why these movements did not result in revolution. Further, why did not massive political strikes, class action, nationalist sentiment, anti-imperialist politics, and so on, which formed the essential features of Iranian politics between 1941-1953, result in revolution?

In actuality, the tradition of strong anti-imperialism, the politics of class alliances, and nationalist struggles, which have been deeply rooted in Iranian political culture, are more than a century old. Although, as a result of the internationalization of capital, Iran had been allowed to exercise a degree of autonomous action, the survival of a local dominant class was certainly dependent upon external forces. This is indicative of a long-lived political dependence.³¹ The ruling class of Iran, in alliance with Western oligarchic elites, never even attempted to rise above its personal dogmatism, bourgeois cults, and prejudices to serve the cause of social justice. Devoted only to the cause of stability and short-term self-interest, these classes thought that they could create a political order through forced control. But they failed to realize that, even though they could establish a superficial order by repression, there is no single empirical item to lend support to the idea that one can control the minds of the masses. Revolution, in fact, grows out of the inherent contradictions in the prevailing mode of thought. There is, of course, a deep valley between these dominant negative ideas and modern, progressive philosophical thoughts. The creation of a new mode of thought

without eliminating this gap cannot be realized. At least, this is what historical class struggle teaches us. The active elimination of militant forces throughout the world itself lends support to this argument. Indeed, this is historical necessity, and one cannot simply stop human will and the march of history.³²

The history of Iran since its integration into the capitalist world has been a history of domination, political penetration, economic exploitation, and struggle against prevailing class rule. Iran has, historically and empirically speaking, participated in a long struggle against imperialist designs. The movements introduced earlier definitely reflect the Iranian people's epochal struggle to cast off the yoke of neocolonial domination and oppression. These struggling classes have been motivated to choose the path of independent political development, the realization of which, without the national liberation movement, would seem to be impossible. It is in this context that it is claimed that all historical struggles, whether they take the form of political, religious, philosophical, or national liberation movements, are manifestations of the class struggle.³³ In Iran, religion, along with the other progressive forces, clearly played a dominant role in class struggle against foreign domination. As an element of national identity, as Rodinson argues, it has served as a banner in the struggles against external forces.³⁴

It follows from this analysis that decremental relative deprivation and aspirational RD models and J-curve theory fail to explain the intricacies of the Iranian Revolution. They are ahistorical and apolitical. They tend to deemphasize the cultural and spiritual factors. For instance, how can RD explain the role of

Shi'ism, which has mobilized and led protest movements for at least a century in Iran? The theory does not, as demonstrated, survive empirical tests. All these formulations fail before the evidence of the Iranian case. What is the connection between frustration and radicalism? RD does not mention anything in this regard. Gaps between expectations and the means to satisfy them have always existed in human society. If the gap factor is so critical, then all Third World social formations and even Western oligarchies should have already exploded. Moreover, prolonged frustration may result in apathy or passivity and the development of new objectives. The blacks in America today are a striking example. Thus, the RD model, with respect to empirical investigation, fails to explain the Iranian Revolution.

Furthermore, RD theory involves validity and measurement problems. Let's assume that RD led to the development of discontent in Iranian society. Then this discontent was politicized by the leadership, and irritations created by the government converted politicized discontent into rebellion. This indeed happened in the early 1960s, but it did not result in social transformation. Hence, it is a sweeping generalization to say that politicized discontent ensued by RD can lead to revolution. Iranian history, in fact, sharply disputes the theoretical validity of the psychological approach. It is, however, safe to say that almost all human societies tend to suffer from RD in one period or another, but that these societies have very rarely converted the suffering engendered by RD into a revolutionary movement.³⁵ RD may only explain the potential for violence.

In addition to problems of validity, it is extremely difficult to measure the intensity of RD and other basic concepts, for example, the expectation/satisfaction gap or politicized discontent or frustration. How is it possible to determine whether discontent is politicized? At what point do the masses reach the peak of revolutionary movement? In the Iranian case, the lower classes were in one way or another affected by the Shah's sociopolitical and economic measures. But did all participant classes in revolution suffer equally from RD? The answer is obviously no. Hence, RD cannot be relied upon as an analytical tool for explaining revolution.

In sum, the psychological model fails to explain how a revolutionary mental state can be assessed and how it is possible to generalize from a crude concept like the "revolutionary state of mind." How can we know that a mind has reached a revolutionary state? These are empirical questions and psychological theories have no answer to them. These theories are not politically and historically based. In reality, without the institution of the political party, as Trotsky rightly argues, to organize popular discontent, the force of that discontent will be like steam in a piston; it will be dissipated. This is not to say that Trotsky ignores the usefulness of steam. For him, the piston/steam dichotomy consists of mutually reinforcing factors. He maintains that events are set in action not by piston or cylinder, but by steam. The psychological models emphasize the significance of the steam and ignore the organizational capacity of the cylinder. Therefore, they end up confusing the issue. These theories fail to explain how grievances can be mobilized into militant street movements. Clearly, the psychological approaches

divert attention away from the primacy of political class conflict. Instead, they derive the sources of struggle from the aggrieved impulses arising out of frustration, relative deprivation, and structural stresses and strains.³⁶ In this manner, in fact, class struggles, liberation movements, exploitative and unjust social relations, imperial domination, and so on, are "psychologized" and reduced to no more than anger-inducing tendencies and frustrations which may degenerate into apathy or passivity instead of violence. Further, these models fail to point out that the revolutions in the modern epoch are largely the result of uneven capital accumulation and contradictions. Contradictions in the peripheral formations exist between the dominant imperial forces, the indigenous ruling class which is subordinated to it, and the great masses of the people. These theories, in fact, not only do not contain such critical defining variables, but also lack the capacity to explain how these social contradictions can be translated into class-determined popular movements.³⁷

ENDNOTES

¹Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 24.

²Ibid., p. 46.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., pp. 12-13.

⁵Ibid., pp. 46-47.

⁶The Shah later stated that this reduction was probably one of his greatest policy mistakes. See Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Answer to History, (New York: Stein and Day, 1980), pp. 155-156.

⁷Actually, this point is disputed; those who supported the regime argued that land reform mobilized the ulama into oppositional movement. But Hamid Algar's view is against such a stand. Khomeini did not oppose land reform at all. What was for him politically important was that the Shah's regime failed to generate Fatvas, that is, justification, delivered by a Mujtahid. See his article "The Oppositional Role of Ulama in Twentieth Century Iran," in Scholars, Saints, and Sufis, ed. by Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 231-253. On this account, see p. 246.

⁸As a result of a traditional alliance between the bazaris and the ulama, the former's contribution to the latter has been very generous. In addition, it is an institutionalized tradition: religion obligates believers and followers to assist ulama and religious institutions as much as they can. Hence, the Shi'i clergy, based on personal observation, were quite independent of the state.

⁹Shahrough Akhavi, Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran: Clergy-State Relations in the Pahlavi Period (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980), p. 93.

¹⁰Those conservatives who followed Burujirdi's lead opposed land reform. And others like, for example, Sayyid Mahmud Taliqani, argued for land reform (ibid.). Ayatollah Sayyid Kazim Shariatmadari was said to favor the distribution of vaqf lands. See ibid., n. 9, and Ali-Reza Nobari (ed.), Iran Erupts (Stanford: Iran-American Documentation Group, Stanford University, 1978). Vaqf is a holding endowed in accordance with Shi'i Islamic law for charitable purposes, for example, maintenance of shrines, mosques, or religious schools.

¹¹See "An Exile's Dream for Iran: An Interview with the Shi'ite Leader Ayatollah Khomeini," in Iran Erupts, ed. Ali-Reza Nobari (Stanford: Iran-American Documentation Group, 1978), pp. 9-17. In an interview, Imam Khomeini was asked to declare his stand on the agrarian reform. According to the imam, being against land reform was no more than allegation. The Shah's reform, in his view, was designed to create a consumer market for foreign countries. He added, "Our definition of land reform is a means of helping peasants produce what benefits them and punish those landlords who have violated Islamic laws." When he was asked whether he would give distributed lands back to their owners, he responded "Certainly not." The owners were required by Islam to distribute their lands, but they have not done so. They have confiscated accumulated wealth which belongs to the people, and this is a deviation from Islam.

¹²See, for example, Bahman Nirumand, Iran: The New Imperialism in Action (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), pp. 126-33. See also F. R. Dana, Imperialism va Furu Pa Shi-i Kishavarzi [Imperialism and Agricultural Destruction] (Tehran: Maziar Publication, 1358), p. 79. This argument is also advanced by Jalal Al Ahmad, in Dar Khidmat va Khiyanat Ruwshanfikran [In Service and Betrayal of Intellectuals] (Tehran: Kharazmi Publications, 1357), pp. 271-272.

¹³A. K. S. Lambton, The Persian Land Reform (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), v. 18-20. See also idem, "On the Position of the Marjaal-taglid," Studia Islamica (1964):120-121. In addition, as Eric J. Hooglund rightly argues, the politics of land reform was not designed to initiate a radical transformation which would result in the alteration of traditional relatives in rural areas. There is no reason, then, why the clergy might have been threatened by the loss of its holdings. See Hooglund, Land and Revolution in Iran (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), pp.98-99.

¹⁴Nikkie R. Keddie, "Comments on Skocpol," Theory and Society 11 (May 1982):289.

¹⁵Ervand Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 141.

¹⁶British Minister to the Foreign Office, "Report on the Situation in Iran," F.O. 371 Persia 1935/34-18992, cited in *ibid.*

¹⁷Keddie, "Comments," pp. 288-89. See also Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, p. 144.

¹⁸Keddie, "Comments," pp. 288-89.

¹⁹Hamid Algar, The Roots of the Islamic Revolution (London: Open Press, 1983), pp. 18-19.

²⁰Maxine Rodinson, Islam and Capitalism, trans. Brian Pearce (University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 229. According to Rodinson, Islam as an ideology played a role in past class struggles. This has coincided with its role as a national symbol and national identity in the struggles against foreign domination.

²¹Bizhan Jazani, "The History of Contemporary Iran," in Capitalism and Revolution in Iran, (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp. 1-45.

²²See Eqbal Ahmad, "Iran and the West: A Century of Subjugation," in Tell the American People, Perspectives on the Iranian Revolution, ed. David H. Albert (Philadelphia: Movement for a New Society, 1980), pp. 26-41. See also Suroosh Irfani, Iran's Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship (London: Zed Books, 1983), pp. 19-43; Hamid Algar, Religion and State in Iran 1785-1906, the Role of the Ulama in the Qajar Period (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), esp. chapter 12, "The Repeal of the Tobacco Concession and Its Consequences." Algar sees the struggle as essentially between the people and the state. And this conflict tends to be sharpened by the enhancement of foreign involvement in Iran. So the concern was the survival and preservation of Iran. (Thus it can be inferred that this indeed has nothing to do with the RD syndrome, for the psychological approach has nothing to say about class-based historical struggle. If a theory is not historically bound, its explanatory capacity is extremely limited.) See also Keddie, Religion and Rebellion in Iran (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1966), chaps. 2 and 3. In the introduction, Keddie clearly prints out the ongoing foreign domination and the mass struggle aimed at elimination of the imposed exploitative relations. Furthermore, see Algar, "The Oppositional Role of the Ulama in Twentieth Century Iran," pp. 231-253.

²³See Abrahamian, Iran Between Two Revolutions, pp. 95-96; Katouzian, The Political Economy, pp. 77-79.

²⁴Ahmad Ashraf, "Iran: Imperialism, Class, and Modernizations from Above" (Ph.D. dissertation, New School for Social Research, 1971), pp. 54-57.

²⁵Ibid., p. 56. See also Jazani, Capitalism, p. 18.

²⁶See Gurr, Why Men Rebel, pp. 50-51.

²⁷Hamid Algar, The Roots of the Islamic Revolution, p. 21.

²⁸Ibid., p. 22.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Fred Halliday, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," Third World Quarterly (October 1979):1-16.

³¹See Jonna de Groot, "Iran: What Past? What Future?" Marxism Today (April 1979):102-110.

³²Ho Chi Mihn argues that there is a deep valley between capitalism and socialism. This valley is going to be filled by the ashes of communist forces. The indication is that no matter how decisively capitalism kills and how potently it resists the highest stages of development, its transition to socialism will inevitably be effected.

³³See, for example, Introduction to the 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonapart (New York: International Publishers, 1984), p. 23.

³⁴See Rodinson, Islam and Capitalism, p. 229.

³⁵Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 34.

³⁶Leon Trotsky, The History of the Russian Revolution (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1932), See Preface: xix For a good criticism, see Rod Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," in Theory and Society 8 (1979):52-58. See also Leon Trotsky, "Revolution and Insurrection," in Radical Sociology, ed. David Horowitz (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 233-83.

³⁷David Horowitz, "Imperialism and Revolution," in Radical Sociology, ed. David Horowitz, pp. 283-307. For an excellent and radical interpretation of these contradictions, see Richard C. Edwards, Michael Reich, and Thomas E. Weisskopf (eds.), The Capitalist Systems (London: Prentice-Hall International, 1972), chapter 2.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALIST APPROACH

It is widely believed by critical thinkers that the structural-functionalist approach is intellectually biased in favor of the established capitalistic order. The theory does have a strong attachment to the dominant negative reality. It tends to enhance its capacity to control, to obfuscate, and to repress progressive social change. It is also believed that this approach inculcates conservative virtues in an attempt to internalize the dominant ideology which, because of vested interests, is not only potentially hostile to change, but also counterrevolutionary. It can be safely argued that, with the expansion of the corporatist role of the American elite, the opposition to its global domination is sharpened. Domination breeds contradictions, which find expression in an intensified anti-imperialist class struggle from below. The dominant class, therefore, needs political devices to defuse political activism from below and to justify the existing social order.¹

Thus those who control the means of production are critically in need of formulations to increase their ability to control society and rationalize the existing exploitive class relations. It is only then that the degree of tolerance and political tranquilization can be effected. Hence, social integration requires basic research, which is supplied by structural functionalism. This approach, to be sure, is designed to perpetuate the status quo and, more importantly, to repress revolutionary change. It is thus extremely conservative, and attempts, by investigating ideas and political tendencies, to recognize, control and, in most circumstances, to eliminate alternative democratic forces within societies.²

So, in a sense, this conservative program is designed to implant in the ruled the myths, values, and ideology of the ruling class. Hence, its basic function is the preservation of the status quo through the creation of a conformistic logic. It is not very important that such research or political thought tends to deny the "reality" of its contradictions.³ Conservative researchers must devise formulations which will conceal those contradictions, assuming that this will lead to the creation of a legitimate order. In reality, the functional-conservative role of this research is aimed at the repression of progressive revolutionary social change and deviant militant ideas. It is totally devoted to maintenance of the existing order. It never questions the dominant structures, nor does it say anything about dominated class relations. It tries to explain and justify the existing realities and possessive tendencies. Its overall intention is to show how good the whole system is. If parts are malfunctioning because of inherent contradictions in the system, this study endeavors to recognize and correct the situation. The value of the whole is thus taken for granted. It is an absolute, a perfect and contradiction-free system. In sum, the basic objective of this type of inquiry is the preservation of the capitalistic order; otherwise, the forces in domination cannot be benefited in a manner they desire.⁴

To legitimize the dominant structure, a sophisticated conservative definition of negative social reality is absolutely essential.⁵ This is, in fact, provided by Talcott Parson's "Grand Theory." According to Parsons, there are two factors by which the social "equilibrium" can be attained and retained, and if either of these mechanisms breaks down, "disequilibrium" steps in. The first

mechanism is what he calls "socialization." This means that from childhood people are socialized into accepting prevailing social norms and values, a process which is, needless to say, necessary to maintain the existing dominant order. The idea, in fact, is to have people internalize the dominant values. The second mechanism is "social control." By this Parsons means keeping people in line with the dominant norms and values, or subjecting deviants to police control, the idea being to prevent them from disrupting the prevailing structures of domination.⁶

The theory is clearly supportive of the powerful and the privileged. Even "democracies," Parsons argues, "urgently need a functional equivalent of aristocracy as the security base for leadership." He goes on to state that, in order for collective goals to be realized, a certain degree of social, economic, and political inequality is a functional necessity of "complex, industrial society."⁷

This argument is clearly heavily conservative. It ignores the contradictory nature of society. In addition, it fails to comprehend the class basis of the system and the importance of class struggle in determining the direction of goals and state policies. This type of investigation, therefore, is primarily concerned with preservation rather than with transformation of the prevailing structures. How then can structural functionalism be employed to explain and predict revolutionary change? Especially since the functionalist school of thought does not attempt to question how the "whole" operates, let alone understand its disruption.⁸

One of the most prominent exponents of the functionalist approach is Chalmers Johnson. His theory is modeled after Parsons' "Grand Theory" of the

social system. Yet, he believes he has devised a theory that explains social revolutions.

Johnson's main thesis is that revolutions take place when the social system is in a state of "disequilibrium." Disequilibrium is generated when "intransigent" elites are unable or unwilling to meet the challenge of multiple "dysfunctions" created by environmental change, for example, economic change, new ideas, the introduction of technology, or modernization. Johnson defines "dysfunction" as "the condition that causes the disequilibrium and that demands remedial action to restore a new equilibrium."⁹ According to Johnson, the existing social system is confronted with a potential crisis whenever a society's values and realities become "dissynchronized." Once this happens, individuals lose their identity and become normless. Disoriented, valueless individuals are thus ready to accept alternative values formulated and introduced by an externally mobilized revolutionary movement. At this point, ideology plays a crucial role. An increase in critical ideological thinking occurs in response to the society's needs to create a cohesive value system.

Hence, the impetus to crisis is derived from the experience of disoriented social forces, because, in a disequilibrated system, old norms and values "no longer provide an acceptable symbolic definition and explanation of existence."¹⁰ As a result, "personal disequilibrium" is generated, and the number of deviant forces is increased. A revolutionary situation develops if the ideology of the movement creates political alliances among deviated groups and begins to attract large numbers of adherents.

The dynamic element which leads to the development of lines of cleavage is ideology. Without ideology, deviant subcultural groups -- such as delinquent gangs, deviant patriotic associations -- will not form alliances, and the tensions of the system which led particular groups to form these associations will be dissipated without directly influencing the social structure.¹¹

Although this possibility defines the potential revolutionary situation for Johnson, the success of revolution depends primarily upon whether or not the political elites of the society are willing and able to initiate policies, including conservative changes which retain the confidence of those forces who still have not deviated from the system and believe in its ability to move toward a "resynchronization of values and environment."¹² It follows from this analysis that, in the face of multiple dysfunction, then, political elites have only two alternatives: they may either conduct an accommodationist policy for change, that is to say, meet upsurging pressures for change, or they may utilize coercive means to prevent the occurrence of a successful revolution. If they choose the first option, societal tensions and strains are relieved and resynchronization is achieved. The system returns to a state of equilibrium. Johnson, in fact, believes that it is theoretically possible for the authorities to modify existing values and institutions in order to prevent crises and avert the need for revolution.¹³

If the political elites adopt the second option, they have to employ coercion to maintain order. This utilization of force leads to what is known as "power deflation" and results in a loss of legitimacy for the ruling elites. Power deflation plus the loss of legitimacy, which is one of the manifestations of elite intransigence, constitute the necessary causes of revolution. This revolutionary

situation is reinforced by another variable called the "accelerator," which is defined as something like a war or an earthquake.¹⁴ This indicator, in turn, undermines the elite's monopoly of the means of coercion and leads to revolution. Johnson's theoretical formulation can be summed up as follows:

Multiple Dysfunction + Elite Intransigence + X (Accelerator)=Revolution

Before attempting to subject Johnson's formulation of structural functionalism into empirical scrutinization, consider the proposition that all Third World formations suffer from multiple dysfunctions, and even highly advanced Western capitalistic societies are not balanced or equilibrated formations. Iran was, by no means, an exception to this rule. No theoretician, in fact, can afford to ignore the class-based definition of societies. The class structure of society is generated by capital accumulation in a historical process. When social forces enter into production relations, one class, by virtue of the ownership of the means of production, benefits from this interaction and the other classes suffer material inequality.

In order to maintain such a relationship, the monopolization of the means of coercion is necessary.¹⁵ Since it is the repressive power of the system that destroys oppositional political organizations. Concentrated attacks on trade unions, progressive thoughts, and so on are necessary because the class that dominates the system does not have mass-based power. The alienated classes simply do not support the system or identify with it. Thus, the ruling class has no option but to utilize the state machinery--justified in the name of national security--to preserve the prevailing relations of domination.¹⁶ But in whose interest

"security" is initiated? Even if we assume that the state is instituted to mediate conflict and reconcile the antagonism generated by capital accumulation, there remains a fundamental problem--the mediation of the state itself. Conflicting interests may be reconciled by state intervention and class antagonism to some extent improved, but why, in the face of balancing mediation of the state does the gap between the haves and the have nots persist? Why is the social distance between the two expanded? And why is the socioeconomic status of the rich enhanced and that of the poor lowered? It can be argued that the major political objective of the state is to preserve capitalistic relations and to perpetuate the domination of a particular class.¹⁷ This is why order is perceived as the highest political good and why the use of repression is commonly justified by the ruling classes. The state, in peripheral social formations, constitutes the tool of domination and repression.¹⁸

Eqbal Ahmad's argument aptly illustrates the issue under consideration. These types of states "are even experimenting with new methods of terrorizing the people and eliminating their opposition while reducing the 'visibility' of their excesses. Increasingly, people are tortured in 'safe houses,' in civilian quarters rather than identifiable prisons or concentration camps. Actual and potential dissenters disappear more often than they are imprisoned."¹⁹ This analysis shows class relations and class domination about which structural functionalism has nothing to say. It further shows an open or hidden conflict going on between the dominant and dominated classes. Structural functionalism simply fails to take the class conflict into consideration.

As one study indicates, many Iranians were tortured under the Shah of Iran and many others simply disappeared. In Indonesia, 500,000 to 1 million communists were butchered after the 1955 coup, and over 30,000 disappeared in Latin American between 1968 and 1978.²⁰ Coercive policies are, in fact, implemented to repress, to force information from, and to subordinate the oppositional forces and weaken their organizational capacity against the dominant structures.²¹ These structures are associated with corruption, nepotism, patron-client relationships, personalism, connection, and the like. The state agencies in peripheral formations involve themselves in widespread corruption and stealing from the common good.²² The people thus suffer from both political and economic domination by the state. Hence, it is quite legitimate to argue that the state structure is a critical determining factor in the mediation of class domination and disguising class relations in peripheries.²³ Structural functionalism is thus irrelevant.

In Iran the class character of the system had alienated it from the masses. With the integration of Iran into the world capitalist system and the process of the internationalization of capital and capital accumulation, the country's dependence upon the capitalistic system, by virtue of its urgent need for technology, skilled manpower, military advisors, and technicians, was established. This linkage variable, that is, dependent development, because of the class nature of external and internal structures, led to uneven and unequal development. Above all, it led to the formation of cultural contradictions and antagonistic anti-imperial domination. The fact is that the state had been totally alienated from the people. In other words, the state/people relationship was determined by antagonism. It is safe

to argue that the Pahlavi regime always continued its functional operation in a state of disequilibrium and in most circumstances multiple dysfunctionism was accompanied by dictatorial stubbornness of the ruling oligarchy and accelerating variables, but no revolution had taken place in Iran.

There have been many political anti-colonial/imperial movements in Iran. In reality, all these movements were instigated by the contradictions emanating from external intrusion and domination, which I believe has nothing to do with Johnson's dysfunctionism variables. Nonetheless, there are two basic historical and imperial developments that are perfectly compatible with the theoretical preconditions of Johnson's structural functionalism. Yet those development or theoretically congruent causal factors did not result in revolution. These two political events are as follows: (1) transition from the Qajar dynasty to the Pahlavi dynasty, and (2) replacement of Reza Shah by his son, the second Shah.

On the basis of Johnson's theory of functionalism, the transition from the Qajar to the Pahlavi dynasty should have taken place by a revolutionary process, because the Qajars were plagued by multiple dysfunctions caused by power deflation and aggravated by a loss of legitimacy due to concessions granted to rival imperial powers. Furthermore, in Johnson's opinion, when such a disequilibrium occurs in a society and is reinforced by an "accelerator" variable, for example, war, the revolution is inevitable. Iran, in fact, was a disequilibrated society due to external pressures and internal conflicts. According to the secret Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907, Iran was to be divided into spheres of influence.

The Russians were to take over the northern part of Iran and the central provinces and the British were to capture the oil-rich southern provinces.²⁴ Each imperial intention was backed up by internal tribal forces and agents. By mid-1911, the tribal conflict and hostility ruled supreme in provincial cities. The tribal/ethnic struggle, in fact, had drastically weakened the central government, a condition that further deteriorated at the outbreak of the First World War, after the invasion of the country by British, Russian, and Turkish forces. In October 1911, the invading British forces landed in the southern part of the country. The Russians began occupation of Enzali and Rasht in November 1911. By 1915, the western part of the country was invaded by Turkish forces. By 1919, no effective central government existed outside Tehran. In addition, the autonomous separatist movements had assumed political power in Gilan, Azerbaijan, Khorasan, and Khuzistan, and the tribal leaders were in control of much of Kurdistan and Baluchistan in 1920.²⁵

It follows from this analysis that these disequilibrated and deteriorated political conditions are fully consistent with the theoretical prerequisites of Johnson's formulation. Yet what occurred was not a revolution but a coup which ended the Qajars' rule and founded the Pahlavi dynasty. This analysis, thus, clearly reveals the failure of functionalism to explain a revolutionary transformation, especially if we ask why, despite the existence of all the theoretical preconditions in Iran, a coup instead of a revolution took place?

Furthermore, if it could be proven that the centralized arbitrary system of Reza Shah contained explosive contradictions and that the ensuing

deligitimization was an indication of a hidden conflict against the prevailing contradictory rule, and that this situation was reinforced or worsened by Johnson's "acceleration" variable, the political, transition with respect to the theory, from Reza Shah to his son might have been effected by revolution. But, again, this was not the case.

As Iranian political history proves, Reza Shah eliminated the Constitution of 1905-1906, thus centralizing the power of absolutism. He tightly controlled society, blocking or breaking down Separatist tendencies.²⁶ The system suppressed the bazar class and severely undermined the power base of the ulama. Religious practices were discouraged and anticlericalism, by emphasizing Persian rather than Islamic culture, formed the basis of the policy. In addition, the constitutional right given to the ulama by the 1905-1906 Constitution to supervise the legislative process was practically destroyed. In 1934, the state even gained political power over religiously endowed lands.²⁷

Political contradictions plagued the system because the modernization programs carried out under the Shah did not alter the agrarian structure in Iran. Hence, the principal task, which was redistribution of land and creation of a just society based on law formulated by the constitution, remained unaccomplished. Instead, he moved to forcefully confiscate the small landowners' property. He made himself the largest landowner,²⁸ not from investment nor from business or production, but by confiscating others' property. The people's right to property, especially in land, was constantly violated. No one was immune to the Reza Khan's despotism. For instance, Reza Khan, in an attempt to acquire property in

the fertile and productive lands of northern Iran, dispatched his officials there to compel the original owners of those lands to transfer their titles as well as their right of ownership by forced sale or outright confiscation to Reza Shah. When this forced takeover of land was disclosed by the progressive forces in Tehran, massive arrests resulted. Some political activists were arrested, exiled, tortured, and killed in connection with this episode.²⁹

Although at this stage of political development there still did not exist a sign of Johnson's power-deflation variable, the existence of the the loss of legitimization indicator was out of the question. The system was obsessed with the fear of political opposition and violently crushed all kinds of political and social rights and forcefully blocked any type of individual bid for freedom. No political parties, either Liberal or Left, were allowed to exist. Lawlessness, repression, and despotism constituted the foundation of the system. And all of these atrocities were perpetuated by the fear of a radical political action from below.³⁰ Such a system could be preserved only if the oppositional forces were held in check. That is why rights were violated constantly and lives were taken or lost.

It thus antagonized social relations and created intense animosity among the social classes. The hidden as well as the open opposition to the policies of the regime was constantly expanding. The regime was, in fact, the victim of self-created contradictions emanating from political insecurity. For instance, it expanded higher education and dispatched students to Europe, but after they returned to Iran, their thoughts, as well as their mental production, were subjugated to unprecedented state censorship. In many cases, educated social forces were

arrested and kept in prison for years because they had read certain books, translated forbidden materials, or published critical papers.³¹

Hence, debilitating contradictions could be found in systemic self-serving policies. The regime modeled Iran after the Western world insofar as industrialization, institutionalization, social system, and education were concerned. Yet it suppressed the progressive features of Western political thought and ignored the fact that radical ideas played a major role in democratization of the social order and progress in these countries.³² It killed democratic aspirations, eliminated progressive thought, and murdered, exiled, imprisoned, or blacklisted progressive social thinkers.³³

If we take these factors as signs of personal and political insecurity, and they were, then the manifestation of an imbalanced system and political opposition from below is reinforced. Hence, it should be emphasized that the regime's resort to political violence was primarily designed to preserve the insecure state from the class and ethnic opposition which posed a threat to it. Moreover, without eliminating progressive ideas and control of social forces, it was impossible for the Reza Shah to illegally confiscate and concentrate the wealth of the country in his hands and those of a few court-connected sycophants. It was through structurally determined violence that the system widened the gap between the haves and the have nots and provoked intense antagonism and conflict. Thus, there existed an irreconcilable conflict between society's need for socioeconomic, political, and educational progress on the one hand and the preventive superstructure of the society on the other.³⁴

This empirical presentation clearly shows that the system did not have an acceptable and legitimate social base. It was also in a constant state of insecurity. Thus, Johnson's two variables, loss of legitimacy and an imbalanced situation, were clearly in existence. And the structural contradictions had created multiple dysfunctions which, in fact, were in need of an instigator. The latter was provided by the Allied invasion of Iran. In fact, the people's resentment of the system was so intense that even the humiliating invasion of Iran by the Allied Forces did not trigger an effective antioccupation movement. The oppressed masses in Iran were delighted by the Reza Shah's fall.³⁵ This invasion, however, almost sealed the destiny of the Pahlavi regime. Its credibility and reliability to withstand occupational forces were practically destroyed. Yet the invasion of the country and the humiliation (which can be properly substituted for Johnson's "accelerator" variable), did not lead to revolution but to a peaceful transition from the father to the son. This occurrence, too, repudiates functionalism's explanation of social conflict.

In reality, structural functionalism does not explain the Iranian Revolution. More importantly, it is not a theory of revolution. It theoretically implies the preservation of the system. It totally ignores the external linkage variables, that is, the pressures from the international environment. As a matter of fact, the internal structures in Third World formations are reinforced by the structures in domination from the metropolis. Further, the theory of structural functionalism fails to see that the state in class societies is established to preserve the status quo and to protect prevailing class interests. Its fundamental function is

to ensure the continued dominance of the existing structures, which constitute a contradictory whole. Hence, attaining and retaining social order characterized by class relations results in the generation of the dictatorial despotism which forms the backbone of peripheral politics.³⁶ Yet the dictatorship in peripheries is not developed exclusively from within, nor is it autonomous. It is only partially the product of internal politics and is reinforced by the structural crisis of world capitalism. This is clearly reflected in the role of external forces of domination. They train and arm the regimes in their peripheries. They provide these countries with the sophisticated tools with which to control the people and keep them in check. The fact is that the bureaucratic authoritarianism in Third World formations not only is politically supported by the external structures, it simply cannot exist without class alliance with them.³⁷ This is precisely why the state in peripheries is a hated institution cut off from the people. It cannot win the battle against people's national liberation movements. When this class institution is supported externally by dominant metropolis structures, the people's conviction that the state is a tool of oppression in the hands of imperial agents for the purpose of repressing internal democratic forces is reinforced and confirmed.³⁸

The Iranian regime was one that had been detached from its base, that is, the people, since the advent of capitalism. This regime was bogged down with social conflict and contradictions. The problem stemmed from the fact that the regime was not constructed by the common people, but instead with the approval and assistance of imperial powers and the internal ruling class. Although Iran has never been colonized, its political destiny has, to a large extent, been determined

overseas. This influence continued until the very end of the revolution. This argument clearly reflects the assumption that the vital interests of the oligarchic elite in the center and the ruling class in its peripheries are closely associated. In fact, without preserving the prevailing system, the interests of neither class can be realized. The existing conservative order is the only one which guarantees their well-being and politicoeconomic predominance. The imperial commitment to the preservation of the status quo and conservative causes is thus inevitable.³⁹

Indeed, imperial support of the Iranian ruling class since the integration of the country into the capitalistic economic order was always real and present. The Shah always tended to side with the oligarchic elites and Iranian comprador bourgeoisie class and act with them against the masses. There can be no doubt that such a strategy would lead to the creation of inequality, injustice, uneven development, and greater sociopolitical and economic achievement for the rich and a dominated social relationship for the oppressed majority. Such an exploitative class relationship resulted in increasing polarization between radicalized progressive social forces in Iran, on the one hand, and the alienated state and the imperial/counterrevolutionary classes, on the other. The revolution in Iran, therefore, was fought directly against the domestic ruling class and indirectly against the imperial classes in the metropolitan centers. The external dimension of revolution in the modern era, therefore, is extremely important, for empirically speaking, revolutions have taken place mostly in countries where imperial domination was strongly felt. Each time, anti-imperial grievances came to be the instigating force of the mobilization effort. (China, Cuba, Vietnam, Iran, and

Nicaragua are all examples which support this argument.) In all these revolutions, lower-class forces fought against imperial powers and the domestic elites who implemented imperial policies.⁴⁰ Structural functionalism, so far as the external structures are concerned, does not have empirical or theoretical validity.

Moreover, structural functionalism seems to be no more than a mechanistic and rigid formulation. It ignores the reality that a system cut off from the masses is a dead political body. When a regime is not for the people, how can it be reformed? Despite this, it seeks to avert contradictions which may cause headache for the whole. I tend to believe that, in order to deter the occurrence of a revolution in Iran, the proposed reform programs in Iran were inspired by such formulations. But these programs did not cure the cancerous whole, nor did they prevent a revolution in Iran. Neither did they perpetuate the pro-American elites in power, as the theory of functionalism claims they should have done. The theory seems to contradict itself. If systemic dysfunction is the result of rapid economic development, emergence of new beliefs, technological change, etc., reform may, in fact, contain all of these elements and be defined as an environmental change. If so, why, in order to prevent revolution, bother to initiate such a policy? It seems that reform sometimes becomes the source of dysfunction and at other times a means to remedy it. And more importantly, the concept of dysfunction does not stand up to historical and empirical validation.⁴¹

If, for example, we define the Iranian system as a negative reality which had been in a constant state of multiple tensions, then the existence of dysfunction seems unavoidable. Many Iranians, in fact, always lived in a state of

relative deprivation. The theory's inadequacy in explaining the Iranian Revolution can thus be easily demonstrated. If the Shah's reform programs were instituted in response to existing "multiple dysfunctions," then they might have saved the regime; in the long run they did not. The Shah's system was primarily concerned with accumulation of wealth and capital and appropriation of property. It abused and misused power and encouraged corruption, exploitation, and domination. As Marvin Zonis rightly argues, the "Government of Iran historically has been and continues to be 'of, by, and for the elite.'"⁴²

A self-seeking, self-perpetuating, and elite-serving state can only be a political class instrument designed to preserve the hegemony of the ruling class and to eliminate the class definition of the society. Functionalism ignores the fact that as long as deprivation, exploitation, class relations, and resort to the repressive control of ideas exist, revolutions cannot be avoided.⁴³

A theory that fails to go to the root of a problem and instead tries to perpetuate a prevailing negative order is a faulty formulation indeed. The theory of structural functionalism, by virtue of its theoretical implication to preserve the system and its deep commitment to conservative ideals, is very much aimed at avoiding rather than the explaining the revolution.⁴⁴ It does not recognize that the Iranian Revolution, if put in historical perspective, developed as a result of its own internal contradictions and its own momentum and was reinforced by the emerging organizational variable. It also fails to see that the Iranian Revolution was rooted in the faith, sufferings, and experience of the oppressed and in the consciousness of the working class. Moreover, oppression coupled with humiliation and

degradation are the motor forces of revolution. The domination of Iran by imperialist powers culminated in injured feelings and cynicism, which still prevail. The conflict was, therefore, between neocolonialism and the oppressed. The Iranians were determined to shake off the bondage of captivity, domination, and exploitation. They wanted to do away with the years of implanted ideas and conformism. The people of Iran intended to restore meaning to their lives, win back their lost dignity, and determine their own destiny.⁴⁵ The achievement of these goals without revolutionary movement was almost impossible. Social movement in Iran was, therefore, expressive of the internal contradictions of capital accumulation.

As the contradictory and oppressive social relations in Iran tended to limit thought and inhibit human creativity, the oppressed class thought quietly and initiated a means of radically altering the prevailing unjust, antagonistic social relations. The process, therefore, was dialectical. These are the factors which do not fit functionalism's frame of analysis.

ENDNOTES

¹Alfredo Fasola-Bologan, "The Sociological Profession and Revolution," Sociological Inquiry 40 (Winter 1970):35-43. See also in this connection Albert Szymanski, "The Value of Sociology: An Answer to Lidz," Sociological Inquiry 40 (Winter 1970):21-25. See also James F. Petras and Morris H. Morley, "Anti-Communism in Guatemala: Washington's Alliance with Generals and Death Squads," The Socialist Register (1984):261-77.

²Fasola-Bologan, "Sociological Profession," p. 36.

³Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960).

⁴Ibid., pp. 36 and 42.

⁵Albert Szymanski, "Toward a Radical Sociology," in Sociological Inquiry 40 (Winter 1970):3-25.

⁶Talcott Parsons, The Social System (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964).

⁷Talcott Parsons, The System of Modern Societies (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 102.

⁸For a sharp criticism of Parsonian thought, see Albert Szymanski, The Capitalist Class and the Politics of Class (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1978), pp. 9-11.

⁹Chalmers Johnson, Revolution and the Social System, (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1964), p. 5.

¹⁰Chalmers Johnson, Revolutionary Change (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), pp. 72-73.

¹¹Ibid., p. 81.

¹²Ibid., p. 94.

¹³Ibid., pp. 74-95.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁵Thomas E. Weisskopf (ed.), The Capitalist System: A Radical Analysis of American Society (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 133-36.

¹⁶Clive Y. Thomas, The Rise of the Authoritarian State in Peripheral Societies (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984), pp. 82-87.

¹⁷See Weisskopf, Capitalist System, p. 135.

¹⁸Thomas, The Rise, pp. 88-89.

¹⁹Eqbal Ahmad, "The Neo-Fascist State: Notes on the Pathology of Power in the Third World," International Foundation for Development Alternatives (September/October 1980):15-26.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Thomas, The Rise, p. 90.

²³Ibid., pp. 90-3.

²⁴E. Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 95-96; see also H. Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, pp. 77-79.

²⁵Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, pp. 102-103. See also F. Halliday, Iran. Dictatorship and Development, p. 23.

²⁶Halliday, Iran, p. 23.

²⁷For a detailed analysis, see Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, pp. 135-165.

²⁸Bahman Nirumand, Iran: The New Imperialism in Action (New York: MRP, 1969), pp. 21-6.

²⁹Buzurg Alavi, Chashmhayash (Tehran: Amirkabeer Publication), pp. 128-46. See also Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, p. 150.

³⁰Anvar Khamah-i, Panjah Nafar...va sih nafar (Dybu Press, 1363), p. 17. See also Ihsan Tabari Jami ah-i Iran Dar dowran-i Riza Shah, (Stockholm: Tudeh Publishing Center, 1356), p. 67.

³¹Alavi, Panjah va sih nafar (Tehran: Tabesh Press, 1979), p. 167, pp. 129-40, and chap. 21; and idem, varag Parah'ha-yi Zindan (Berkeley: Iran Zamin Publications). See also Maleki, Khalil. Khatirat-i Siyasi-i Maliki (Tehran: Ravag Publication, 1357), pp. 309-12.

³²Taqi Arani, "Defence at the Trial of the Fifty Three," Donya 4 (Spring-Summer 1963):111.

³³Ihsan, Tabari, Jami ah-i Iran dar dowran-i Riza Shah, pp. 87-91. See also A. Kasravi, "Concerning Reza Shah Pahlavi," Parcham (23-25 June 1942). Great poets like Farrukh-i yazdi and Mirzadeh Ishgi vaiz Gazvini were killed in prison. Social thinkers like Tagi Arani were imprisoned in solitary confinement, and Dr. Arani Kamal al Mulk Naqqash was killed in detention. The Persian's greatest poet, Malik-al-shuara-i Bahar, was blacklisted. For further information, see Alavi, Panjah va sih nafar.

³⁴Tabari, Jami ah-i Iran dar dowran-i Riza Shah, pp. 64-5.

³⁵British Minister to the Foreign Office, "The Effects of Abdication," F.O. 371/Persia 1941/34-27153; American Minister to the State Department, Foreign Relations of the United States (Washington, D.C.: 1945), III, 385. Cited by Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions pp. 164-65.

³⁶Thomas, The Rise pp. 93-94.

³⁷Ralph Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 265-277.

³⁸Norman Miller and Roderick Aya (eds.), National Liberation: Revolution in the Third World (New York: The Free Press, 1971), p. 197.

³⁹This argument is generalized from the following works: David Horowitz, Empire and Revolution: A Radical Interpretation of Contemporary History (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), pp. 225-258. In this connection, Marx argues that "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (ibid., chapter II). idem The Free World Colossus: A Critique of American Foreign Policy in the Cold War (New York: Hill & Wang, 1965) The following is cited in ibid, p. 198: "You killed women and children in Playa Giron [Bay of Pigs], you bombed the first decent houses, the first schools, the first hospitals of Cubans who never before, during the long American protectorate over Cuba, had a roof, an alphabet, or their health. And you did it in the name of liberty, democracy, and free

enterprise. What do you want us to think of these nice-sounding words when in their names a population is murdered and the first proofs of corporate welfare are destroyed? We think the same as Simon Bolivar did 150 years ago: "The U.S. seems destined by Providence to plague with all kinds of evils in the name of liberty."

⁴⁰Alan Wolfe, The Seamy Side of Democracy: Repression in America (New York: David McKay Company, 1973), pp. 242-253.

⁴¹For a good criticism, see Lawrence Stone, "Recent Academic Views of Revolution," in Revolutions. Comparative Study ed. Lawrence Kaplan (New York: Random House, 1973), pp. 25-47.

⁴²Marvin Zonis, The Political Elite of Iran, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 133.

⁴³See Lawrence, Kaplan, Revolutions A Comparative Study (New York: Random House, 1973):66.

⁴⁴Andre Gunder Frank, "Functionalism and Dialectics," in Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution (MR, 1969), pp. 95-108.

⁴⁵Isaac Deutscher advances an excellent argument concerning these ideals (for instance, the development of revolutionary ideas as a result of the internal dynamism of capital development, and class struggle to restore lost dignities). See "Myths of the Cold War," in Containment and Revolution, ed. David Horowitz (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), pp. 13-26.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL CONFLICT MODEL

The theories examined here are ideologically bound. By concentrating merely on the indigenous aspects of social structure and culture, they tend to downplay the impact of external factors on social transformation. Any theoretical framework which fails to incorporate into its frame of analysis such critical defining elements as conquest, socioeconomic and political domination, imbalanced trade relations, uneven development, and the suffering of the dominated class cannot hope to explain objectively the sociopolitical transformation that Third World countries confront.¹ It cannot explain why some societies, such as Japan, which were and are changing rapidly, have not exploded in revolution,² while others, like Iran, have. Hence, these theories, in their emphasis on modernization, do not explain revolution and are ahistorical.³

Most secular and modern programs, as mentioned earlier, were instituted under Reza Shah. Why then, did revolution not occur in the 1920s rather than in the late 1970s? Even more radical secular and modern reform programs took place in Turkey under Mustafa Kemal Pasha (Ataturk), who abolished the caliphate and eradicated religious education, religious courts, and religious orders. Ataturk ordered the adoption of Western civil codes, extended the franchise to women, and replaced the Arabic alphabet with a Latinized one. He also initiated language reform and resorted to massive social change modeled after European perspectives.⁴ More importantly, he had the Ankara National Assembly pass a law declaring that sovereignty pertains to the people who must

control their own destiny. This modern and secular view of sovereignty is in sharp contrast to and a radical reversal of the medieval Islamic doctrine that declares that sovereignty belongs to God.⁵ Thus, one wonders why, even though the pace of social change under Ataturk seems to have been even more rapid than under the late Shah, a revolution from below did not occur in Turkey, but it did in Iran. The theories analyzed earlier do not answer this question.

According to conflict theorists Charles Tilly and Rod Aya, these formulations fail to explain revolution because they totally ignore the political aspects or political components of a revolution. What these theories do is to crudely reduce the political dimension of a conflict to psychological and anger-inducing tensions. In the view of psychological and functionalist theoreticians, aggravating factors, such as relative deprivation, frustration, strain, stresses, disequilibrium, and a "revolutionary state of mind," or a sudden "adverse economic fluctuation," which are caused by rapid modernization programs, render people susceptible to revolutionary street movements.⁷

These variables, however, may activate a political violence, but they cannot, as the experience of the great social revolutions teaches us, make a revolution by themselves. If, for example, the modernization factor holds up as a revolution activator, the socialist countries that have experienced in a relatively short period of time massive social changes should all have exploded in revolution. They have not; however, hence other variables must be included in an analysis of revolution.

The political conflict model is more useful. It emphasizes the significance of structural power relations, types of contention, and the organization and mobilization of involved parties.⁸ These variables are based on empirical evidence and are important contributing factors to revolution. These variables, especially mass mobilization, played a critical, defining role in the Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Nicaraguan revolutions and, most importantly, in the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979.

The political conflict model emphasizes the existence of political conflict between systems and various organized groups. According to this formulation, the struggle between contenders for power is central to the explanation of collective violence and revolution.⁹ An important and representative theoretical work within this school of thought is Charles Tilly's From Mobilization to Revolution.¹⁰ This work is formulated in opposition to aggregate psychological and functionalist approaches. The counterarguments set forth are convincing indeed. The conviction of political-conflict theories is that no matter how frustrated people are or may become, they do not necessarily participate in violent political action. Aggrieved individuals have to be organized into an opposition group. Hence, it is organization that promotes mass mobilization.¹¹ Furthermore, as Tilly puts it,

revolutions and collective violence tend to flow directly out of a population's central political processes, instead of expressing diffuse strains and discontents within the population; . . . that the specific claims and counterclaims being made on the existing government by various mobilized groups are more important than the general satisfaction or discontent of those groups, and that claims for established places within the structure of power are crucial.¹²

Tilly does not incorporate the concept of violence into his analysis of revolution. He sees collective violence as the by-product of competition over power and conflicting objectives. The object of his analysis is "collective action," defined as "people's acting together in pursuit of common interests."¹³ In analyzing collective action, he utilizes two general models, a "polity model" and a "mobilization model."¹⁴ The basic elements of the polity model are governments (institutions that exercise control over the means of coercion within the population), and all other challengers contending for power.¹⁵ The mobilization model includes variables designed to explain collective political action initiated by interested contenders. These variables are indicative of group interests, organization, available resources, and the opportunities and threats that contenders confront in their relationships to the system in power and other contending groups. The major emphasis is, in fact, on organization, because the group's mobilization is determined by its organization.¹⁶

According to Tilly, revolution is a collective action in which the contenders fight to gain political sovereignty over a population or to displace existing power holders.¹⁷ A question arises as to how the dominant order can be displaced. Tilly's answer includes the thesis that a single class cannot make a revolution; hence, a class coalition is required to break down the old regime. Furthermore, a successful revolution depends on the development of multiple sovereignty and the "control of substantial force by the revolutionary coalition."¹⁸ If these conditions hold, the revolutionary contenders are likely to overthrow the existing regime and displace its power holders.

The strength of this theory lies, contrary to the psychological and functionalist approaches, in the emphasis it puts on political organization and class coalition. The overriding significance of organization is emphasized by both theorists and revolutionaries.¹⁹ If the oppressed classes are not revolutionized and politicized, a revolutionary situation cannot be realized simply because in a class society the victims of oppression or the toilers in general are stratified and divided and they live under dissimilar conditions. They possess an inadequate culture and their outlook is narrow. In other words, they are not, politically speaking, aware of the unjust social conditions under which they live. Consequently, they cannot simultaneously comprehend their position in society or subscribe to a conscious political action by which to terminate the servitude and the exploitation that reduce them to subhumanism. The lack of political awareness on the part of the oppressed class necessary to radically transform the existing negative reality is a stumbling block to emancipation. Political blindness as such hinders them from protecting and promoting their class interests.²⁰ Hence the interests of the class cannot be realized without a program, and the program cannot be implemented without a political organization. It is the political organization that inspires, organizes, and mobilizes the masses into political action. It is by means of organization that the dominated class achieves its political class consciousness.²¹

Equally important is the class coalition. Third World formations, in fact, constitute the weakest link in the chains of the capitalistic centers. The working class in these formations is weak as far as its size and organization are concerned. This class by itself cannot participate in a revolutionary action.. If it

did, it could not defeat the existing system. To destroy the bondage of domination, class coalition is essential. According to a prominent scholar, it was the coalition of classes -- workers, bourgeois, and peasants -- which led to the French Revolution, though the workers and the peasants lost the contest very quickly. The same type of coalition played a critical role in the American, English, and Russian revolutions.²²

The Political Conflict Model and the Iranian Revolution

In applying this model to the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, it can be safely argued that the concept of mass mobilization played a critical role in the Iranian Revolution, though not in the way the theory maintains. Indeed, the Iranian Revolution was brought about by a highly organized movement consisting of an alliance of all oppressed forces. To effect a synthesis, it is necessary to develop in the antithesis, that is, the exploited and oppressed, the consciousness which in turn breaks down the false consciousness that chains antithesis to thesis, or the system of servitude and exploitation. Without this development, which can be created only through political education, the immediate forces of revolution are subject to defeatism.²³ It is true that exploitation and oppression can organize and centralize the oppressed for a political action. But how can this political mode be employed to initiate a class alliance and class struggle? The answer lies in organizational vanguardism. It is extremely difficult to revolutionize awareness of the oppressed classes. In a class society, the oppressed are stratified. They live different lives in different ways. The political vision of this class is rather limited. Hence, it cannot simultaneously develop a comprehensive understanding of ongoing dominated

class relations and attempt to break it down. Further, without political education, the oppressed cannot realize their political objectives. Hence, the need for organizationally determined political awareness is a critical variable which needs to be given serious theoretical consideration.²⁴

Probably, Tilly was aware of the importance of such a strategy when he moved to develop this variable, though differently, and incorporate it into the frame of his theoretical analysis. Organizationally determined mass mobilization played a key role in the Iranian Revolution. It made a great contribution to the radicalization of the discontented Iranians. The Shi'i political thought effectively awakened the masses, teaching them that, without struggle, one is not a person. One can become a person only through political action. Hence, perfection depends on man's participation in sociopolitical struggle. In order to become a true Muslim, one has to devote oneself to the construction of a just human society and just social relations. This is possible only by fighting against domination, exploitation, oppression, and ignorance. In politically aware and conscientious individuals, the belief system provokes a commitment to and responsibility for the achievement of higher values. Higher stages of development cannot be realized without social struggle to remove the contradictions.²⁵

In a class society, as argued Shariati, God stands at the side of the people. In other words, God and the people tend to be "synonymous and have the same meaning." Thus when it is said that "rule belongs to God,"²⁶ this means that the people should rule, and not those who claim to be the shadow of God, the representative of the people; or when it is argued that "property belongs to God,"²⁷

it belongs to the people, for God is needless. He has given the goods to man. He did not have any intention of creating a society where one class dominates another. He did not intend to create a society where nonproducers exploit producers. Capital, therefore, must be owned commonly by the public.²⁸ But the ruling class, in gaining this reality, usurped capital and, in order to maintain its claim to ownership of the common good, reverts to oppression and violent means. The Muslim community is thus betrayed and social justice is violated. That is why the ruling and oppressed classes confront each other. The result of the struggle will be a higher stage of development, which is defined as tawhid, a classless society.²⁹

This type of analysis does have a large audience in Iranian society. It has led some people to believe that since absolute ownership belongs to God, the economic domination of man by man is a sin. The right to private property is given by the "Prophet" and "Imams" to a person who has applied his labor to the appropriation of that property. Thus it is the labor of a man that entitles him to the ownership of private accumulation. Without the application of labor to an object, the acquisition of property rights is illegal and unjust, a deviation to which Shi'i Islamic social means do not subscribe. In the Iranian case, the ownership of those who possessed excessive property and wealth by virtue of stealing from the common good rather than appropriation through their labor, was incompatible with social justice, and hence had to be expropriated. This class, in fact, has negated the very being of God and corrupted the Islamic community. The ruling class of Iran, therefore, contrary to the Islamic values which are absolutely against the division of society into the haves and have nots, has divided Iranian society into classes--the

dominant rich and the dominated poor--creating a capitalistic class society. This state must be overthrown and replaced by a just one.

From this, we can deduce that this kind of radical political thought played the most critical defining role in galvanizing the intellectuals, the students, and the educated classes into street movement. It also awakened apolitical forces and brought them into the mainstream of the revolution. In addition, these radical ideas and their application to the liberation struggles within the context of Islam greatly inspired the forces of discontent and mobilized them for political action, especially when these ideas linked internal contradictions to neocolonialism and cultural imperialism.³⁰

Furthermore, the ulamas struggle against the externally supported and installed despotism greatly mobilized the oppressed into the street movements. For instance, Ayatollah Khomeini's steadfastness that "the Shah must go" created enormous political enthusiasm, while it led to an effective and unprecedented mass mobilization. This move practically demonstrated the significance of the organizational vanguardism. Most importantly, when Khomeini accused the Shah of having sold Iran to the Americans, revolutionary momentum grew further. He denounced the Shah for violating the constitution, enriching the wealthy at the expense of the poor, destroying the nation's dignity, identity, and culture, corruption, and, most importantly, wasting the country's resources on foreign goods, such as weapons and luxury items.³¹ This critical and politically-powerful message effectively fueled mass radicalism and revolutionized and mobilized the discontented Iranians into political action.

In addition to the religious contribution to mass mobilization, other organizations initiated important mass-galvanizing efforts. For instance, the National Front revived its political networks and its forces dominated political activism.³² The first spark was ignited by the supporters of Dr. Mosaddegh in 1977. In May of that year, fifty-three lawyers wrote an open letter to the imperial court condemning governmental intervention in the judicial system and insisting on the protection of the judiciary from the abuse of the executive branch. This was the first time since the June uprising of 1963 that the Shah's regime had been publicly criticized. In June 1977, the leading figures of the banned National Front sent another open letter to the Shah, accusing him of destroying the economy, retarding agriculture, and violating human rights and the Constitution of 1905-1906.³³

This sharp criticism was followed by the protests of intellectuals, poets, and authors. They criticized the system on the grounds that it violated the constitution and stifled intellectual development. Similarly, a group of progressive university professors formed their own organization to fight for academic freedom and the sanctity of the classroom. These forces unanimously demanded an independent judiciary, the rebuilding of the agriculture industry, Iranian sovereignty, liberation from all domination and the cancellation of Iran's ties with the imperialist countries. Poetry-reading campaigns further mobilized political activism against censorship of the mind and the environment of fear created by SAVAK, an environment that, they claimed, devoured intellectuality and, with it, all other cultural, poetic, and artistic activities.³⁴

Of course, the Shah's anti-democratic regime could not tolerate this kind of discussion. Therefore, it moved to cancel the meeting forcefully. This action, however, provoked dissension and moved the crowd into the street. The clash between the police and the angry protestors led to the death of one student, injuries to seventy others, and the arrest of hundreds. The bloodshed only further antagonized the students. The campuses, therefore, became scenes of resistance. The polarization and radicalization of the student body and the middle-class intelligentsia led to the common realization that the stifling political atmosphere, unjust class relations, and incredible inequality could no longer be tolerated. Given the politicization of the Iranian students and the continuation and intensification of pressures brought to bear on them, the organization of Iranian students came to be the stronghold of the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979.³⁵

Nonetheless, it was the critically defining role of Shi'ism and the organizational capacity of the leadership that politicized and mobilized them into a class alliance and subsequently into political action. The alliance of the ulama, the intellectuals, the professional middle class, students, and the traditional petite bourgeoisie led to an unprecedented mass mobilization. Yet, according to some political analysts, this alliance, in its confrontation with the system in domination, had arrived at a deadlock. The struggle continued, but there seemed to be no clear conclusion in sight. The balance of force had not yet reached the point to tip the correlation in favor of the interests of the voices from below. The entrance of the organized laboring class, especially those working in the oil fields, into the alliance just made it. In a massive protest, they shut down the factories and production of

oil. This intervention, indeed, broke the deadlock and eventually marked the dawn of the revolution.³⁶

This analysis clearly shows the importance of class alliance and organization-determined mass mobilization. It also reveals that Tilly's formulation insofar as mass mobilization, class alliance, and organization is concerned, is, to some extent, relevant to the Iranian Revolution. With respect to these variables, especially the political focus of the theory, it is an improvement over the approaches analyzed earlier. But, an overemphasis on Tilly's organization-determined mass mobilization may blind us to other critical variables or to the internal dynamism of capitalistic development, for example, structural contradictions, uneven development, and class relations of productions. A question which immediately comes to mind is that, if these variables are so critical, why then did they not materialize in 1953 and 1963, but did in 1979? Although these variables have theoretical validity, an exclusive concentration on them may be misleading. Hence, they should be reinforced by other factors as well.

The political conflict model thus fails to explain the Iranian Revolution. The key defining variable in political conflict theory is the development of "multiple sovereignty." Other critical variables include the intensity of group conflict, the resources available to competing groups. These variables are closely associated with violence and, hence, do not explain revolutionary transformation. The multiple sovereignty variable, therefore, does not stand up to empirical testing. Recall that a situation of multiple sovereignty was developed in Iran in the early

1950s and 1960s, but, in both cases, the situation was resolved with violence, not revolution.

On April 28, 1951, for instance, Dr. Mohammad Mosaddegh became Iran's Prime Minister. He immediately decided to challenge foreign domination by nationalizing the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). Three blocs were involved in the conflict. The progressive nationalistic forces allied themselves to Mosaddegh and demanded the liberation of the country from political domination and economic exploitation, from the ruling oligarchy, from the sycophants of the court and landed aristocratic classes, from the agents of British imperialism, and finally, from the British government. Later, the United States also entered into the conflict, supporting the reactionary forces against the liberal democratic and nationalist government of Dr. Mosaddegh.

Economically speaking, Iran was subordinated to the will of AIOC. For example, in 1950, the imperial British government made more money in income taxes from the company than the Iranian government received from its own contractual shares. Iran received 16 million pounds; the British government received 50.5 million pounds. The Iranians had no say in the company. Nor did they even have a right to examine its books. Thus, Iranian oil production, as well as its pricing and the laboring class, were still controlled by the old imperial power. In many cases, it refused to live up to its contractual obligations.³⁷ Most striking was its refusal to employ Iranian work force or to improve the workers' living conditions. The vast majority of the oil workers lived in the older and overpopulated areas of the oil fields where usually an entire family or three or four

laborers lived in a single room. Even in Abadan, a city founded on "black gold" (oil), ugly shanties, commonly known as straw towns, "tea towns," or "shack towns," began to grow rapidly.³⁸

In addition to its outright economic exploitation of Iran, British interventionism into the politics of the country also posed a serious threat to Iran's national sovereignty. Great Britain had tremendous influence with the Iranian government. In fact, the government was, to a large extent, controlled by the British. Out of 79 deputies of the Seventeenth Majlis (Parliament) convened in 1952, 49, many being landed aristocrats, were pro-British.³⁹ With a parliament dominated by such foreign agents, pursuing independent national development was no more than wishful thinking. The nationalization of the oil industry was "the one and only way of stopping the illegal and illegitimate interference of the oil company in the internal affairs of Iran."⁴⁰ It was intended to eradicate the British political intervention in the internal affairs of Iran exerted through AIOC. This was viewed as a vital prerequisite to the acquisition of full independence and to the reconstruction and promotion of a democratic political system.

However, the realization of these ideals under the existing social reality was impossible, for the Iranian ruling class was the agent of the imperial powers. The nationalization movement and its pressure for constitutional rule put the nationalist forces in direct conflict with the Shah and, through him, with Great Britain and the United States.⁴¹ All progressive nationalist and radical forces firmly supported Mosaddegh's anti-imperialist approach. On Mosaddegh's side stood the National Front, the Liberation Movement, the Tudeh party, the radical

forces, and the progressive radical religious faction. On the Shah's side were the reactionary ruling classes and the agents of the imperial powers.

This empirical presentation fully meets the theoretical preconditions of Tilly's political conflict model. To begin with, the afore mentioned analysis clearly shows the emergence of the "multiple sovereignty" variable. What is evident here is a class-conscious nationalist force challenging the ruling class supported by external forces. Thus, the British, the United States, the ruling class of Iran, and the nationalist forces can be classified as multiple sovereignties, each trying to advance, present, and protect its own class interest. On the basis of theory, these power blocs are political contenders.

This political contention was reinforced by what Tilly calls "organization-determined mobilization and class alliance." In fact, external forces had, in addition to their available resources, military might, economic and political power, resorted to internal agents to challenge rising nationalism in Iran. Thus, mobilization had been carried through and alliances made. The conflict now involved the democratic nationalistic forces who intended to break down the imperial political and economic domination and the internal/external counterrevolutionaries who aimed at the preservation of the existing relations of domination. Nonetheless, Mosaddegh won this struggle against the Shah, forcing him out of the political scene.

In respect to the political conflict approach, the transition of power from the Shah to Mosaddegh should have occurred through a revolution. But it did not happen in conformity with the theoretical expectations of the conflict model.

Even though one may view Mosaddegh's movement as a revolutionary upheaval, it really was not a revolution. The objective of this movement, though it was aimed at imperialist domination, was not a radical revolutionary transformation of society, nor was it the destruction of monarchism. Its basic goal was to force the Shah to pursue constitutionalism and observe the constitutional principles. Moreover, the movement wanted to force the nationalized oil economy to attend to the needs of independent development.⁴² The theory, seen in this light, apparently suffers from a lack of explanatory power. It fails to answer the key theoretical question as to why, despite the fact that all theoretical preconditions were met, a revolution did not occur.

Mosaddegh's nationalization of the oil industry did cause the oppressed Iranians to realize national aspirations and it did lead to the revitalization of constitutional rights. For the first time since the constitutional movement of 1905-1906, an independent national political system was established in Iran and Iranians came into control of their own destiny as well as their sociopolitical and economic resources. The British monopoly over Iranian oil production was broken. The Seventeenth Majlis, a mostly aristocratic, pro-British parliament, was abolished in a direct appeal for the people's consent. Socioclass rigidity was lessened. A land distribution program was formulated that called for a change in the rural structure, and eradication of the exploitive landlord/serf relationship. More importantly, Mosaddegh's adoption of a "negative equilibrium" policy led Iran to a radical neutral political development, while ended foreign incursions and meddling in Iran's internal affairs.⁴³

Unfortunately, because democratic ideals and nationalistic objectives are incompatible with the interests of oligarchy and imperialism, these developments led, on the basis of the conflict model, to the remobilization of conservative and antidemocratic persuasions. The monarchy and its conservative allies made an unholy class alliance with imperialist forces and started fighting back. The basic goal was to overthrow Mosaddegh's constitutional government. In 1953, the struggle started. The metropolis-based conservative forces strongly supported this antidemocratic mobilization. The coalition intended to cripple Mosaddegh's government and to kill political freedom. The driving motivation behind this counterdemocratic alliance was the fear that the continuity of Mosaddegh's liberalism might create class conflict within the Middle Eastern oil fields. And, of course, it could encourage nationalist forces in other countries to rise up and overthrow their own imperial-dominated political institutions. Such actions might disrupt the oil flow to the West and cut the blood line of economic imperialism.⁴⁴

Mosaddegh was overthrown in August 1953 by a coalition of internal and external forces in a CIA-inspired and engineered coup. This development perfectly fits the theoretical expectations of the political conflict approach. Multiple sovereignty had been developed. The Shah was in an irreconcilable, antagonistic conflict with Mosaddegh and the classes that supported him. The CIA-designated military command fully supported the Shah's cause, that is, the politics of reaction. Imperial powers had entered the conflict on the side of the Shah, hence, the resources available to the Shah far exceeded those of Mosaddegh. According to

Tilly, a power bloc that has more political resources will win the political fight. When this occurs, Tilly believes that a revolution is effected. The Shah's coup, therefore, was fully consistent with the theoretical formulation of the political conflict model.

One can, then, based on this formulation, define the Shah's coup as a revolution. But can one really classify it as a revolution that fits the definition of social revolution presented in the introduction? The answer is an emphatic no. This approach fits the definition of political violence, but obviously cannot explain revolutionary upheaval from below.

It should, however, be emphasized that the coup could not have attained its objectives without the support of the reactionary elements who paid and organized lumpen forces. The vested interests cooperated with key coup leaders, but without external intervention, they could not have succeeded. It is widely believed that the CIA spent \$19 million to bribe key reactionary figures and army generals. Mosaddegh was able to document at his trial that the coup cost the United States \$390,000,⁴⁵ although this figure is in dispute. It is not really important how much the U.S. spent in this buying of Iran (sale auction); what is significant is that this policy of intervention, which is in obvious conflict with the democratic ideals of the sovereign rights and independent political aspirations of a nation. In addition, the concept of external interference is an important variable for the purpose of theoretical reasoning, for it surely destroys the balance of forces. So far as the correlation of the forces in conflict is concerned, neither side may be the

winner. But the intervention on one side certainly enables one power bloc to prevail. This variable has no place in Tilly's theoretical framework.

An intervening variable in the modern age is critical for the analytical study of a revolution. This factor, the external linkage variable, lent support to the Shah and tipped the balance of power in his favor. The Shah is reported to have said to Kermit Roosevelt of the CIA, "I owe my throne to God, my people, my army, and to you!" Roosevelt goes on to say, "By you, he meant me and the two countries, Great Britain and the United States, I was representing. We were all heroes."⁴⁶ The Shah named God for political reasons, the people he was talking about were the pro-British landlords, bribed army generals, the reactionary religious faction, and the lumpen. The determining factor, then, was the CIA. It was this external linkage variable which enabled the Shah to accumulate so much wealth for himself and for the foreigners with an interest in the country.⁴⁷ Indeed, in this operation, the forces favoring the status quo won the contest. But was that a revolution? This analysis further demonstrates the inadequacy and irrelevancy of the political conflict model in explaining a social revolution.

In the June 1963 uprising, multiple sovereignty again emerged, but did not develop into a full-scale structural transformation of Iranian society, proof of the failure of the political conflict approach's failure to explain revolutionary change.

However, the Shah's absolutism and imperial domination did not go unchallenged. Once again the coalition of forces which had supported Iran's right to national sovereignty and self-determination appeared. Multiple sovereignty

developed and the oppositional forces clashed with the ruling class in 1963. In response to a deteriorating socioeconomic and political situation, the shah, as mentioned earlier, implemented reforms designed to politically buttress the monarchy through a class alliance with the peasantry. The assumption was that political reform would legitimize the Shah's usurpation of power.⁴⁸

Vested interests opposed these programs, especially land reform, as did students, laborers who desired a "red" rather than a "white" revolution, and the enlightened intelligentsia, who saw in the Shah's reform Western domination, a "revolution of the Shah against the people."⁴⁹ The opposition coalition believed that a fundamental radical change and the monarchy were a contradiction in terms. The reforms were a political means to further domination and exploitation. The dependency of Iran on the United States increased greatly. The fear of Western infiltration and de-Islamization coupled with economic crisis following the boom years of the mid and late 1950s sparked the discontent that led to the June 1963 uprising.

This confrontation, however, did not result in revolution, though all conditions the political conflict model considers necessary for the occurrence of a revolution were present. After several days, the upheaval was suppressed at the cost of thousands of lives. This model fails to explain why, given the coalition of forces, the development of multiple sovereignty, and mass mobilization, this movement did not develop into a revolution, but 1978-1979 did. It fails to answer this and other relevant why questions. It can be deduced from this analysis that on the basis of this approach, the separatist movements of Iranian and Iraqi kurds and

ethnic conflicts in general can be classified as "situations of multiple sovereignty," yet, clearly, such conflicts cannot be regarded as revolutions in the sense of the French, Russian, Chinese, Cuban, Vietnamese, Iranian, and Nicaraguan revolutions.

In sum, this model is ahistorical. The Iranian nation historically has been involved in a continuous and permanent class struggle against the king and, through him, Western oligarchies.⁵⁰ The 1978-1979 Iranian Revolution, in fact, was caused by a confrontation between the people and the Shah and Western domination. The incursion of external forces into the Iranian market, uneven capitalist development in Iran, and sociopolitical contradiction can be regarded as critical defining variables in explaining revolutions in the modern age. The political conflict theory fails to take these critical factors into consideration. The study of a social revolution must be placed in the context of historical analysis with an emphasis on class factors.

ENDNOTES

¹Dean C. Tipps, "Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of Societies: A Critical Perspective," Comparative Studies in Society and History 15 (1973):199-227.

²J. Goldstone, "Theories of Revolution: The Third Generation," World Politics 32 (1979-1980):431.

³The weakness of these theories in explaining a revolution is best explained by Immanuel Wallerstein. According to him, it is time "to put away childish things" (for example, the modernization concept) "and look reality in its face." See Wallerstein, The Modern World System (New York: Academic Press, 1974), p. 132.

⁴James A. Bill and Carl Leiden, Politics Middle East (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), pp. 183-96. See also Carl Leiden and Karl M. Schmitt, The Politics of Violence: Revolution in the Modern World (Princeton, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

⁵Ibid. See also Ellen Kay Trimberger, "A Theory of Elite Revolutions," Studies in Comparative International Development 7 (1972):101-207; and idem, Revolution from Above. Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1978), chaps. 2-3.

⁶Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" Comparative Politics 5 (April, 1973):427-47.

⁷Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered," Theory of Society 8 (1979):65-67.

⁸Ibid., p. 65.

⁹Works by political conflict theoreticians include Anthony Oberschall, Social Conflict and Social Movements (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973); William H. Overholt, "Revolution," in Sociology of Political Organization, ed. (Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Hudson Institute, 1972); Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" idem, "Revolution and Collective Violence," in Handbook of Political Science, ed. Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), v. 3, Macropolitical Theory, pp. 483-556.

¹⁰Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978). Some Iranians believe that this theory explains the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979. Only organizational aspects of the theory are really applicable to the study of the Iranian Revolution, however.

¹¹Ibid., p. 64.

¹²Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" p. 436.

¹³Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, p. 7.

¹⁴Ibid., chap. 3.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 193.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 211-15.

¹⁹Both Lenin and Trotsky emphasized the importance of political organization. See Lenin's, "What Is to be Done?" and the Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky, by Baruch Knei-Paz (Oxford University Press, 1978), chap. 5. See also Leon Trotsky, Theory of Revolution, ed. John Molyneux (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), chap. 2.

²⁰Ernest Mandel, ed., Fifty Years of World Revolution (1917-1967) (New York: Merit Publishers, 1968). Also see James P. Cannon, "The Vanguard Party and the World Revolution," in *ibid.*, pp. 349-59.

²¹In "What Next?" Trotsky writes: "The interests of the class cannot be formulated otherwise than in the shape of a program; the program cannot be defended otherwise than by creating the party. The class, taken by itself, is only raw material for exploitation. The proletariat acquires an independent role only at that moment when, from a social class in itself, it becomes a political class for itself. This cannot take place, otherwise, than through the medium of a party. The party is that historical organ by means of which the class becomes class conscious," (pp. 11-31).

²²See, for example, Moore Barrington, Jr., Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy (Boston: Beacon, 1966) and his, "Revolution in America," New York Review of Books (January 30, 1969), pp. 6-12.

²³Herbert Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

²⁴Lenin, What Is to be Done? (Moscow: Progress Publisher, 1973), p. 42.

²⁵S. Irfani, Revolutionary Islam in Iran (London: Zed Books, 1983), pp. 125-126.

²⁶Ali Shariati, "The Sociology of Islam," trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1979), p. 116.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ayatollah Mahmud Talegani, Islam va Mali Kiyat [Islam and Property]; see also Shariati, "The Sociology of Islam," p. 117.

²⁹Ibid., Shariati, "The Sociology of Islam," pp. 117-120.

³⁰See Jalal Al Ahmad, Garbzadagi [Westoxication] (Tehran: 1341).

³¹See Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, pp. 478-479.

³²Haji Ali Ashgar Sayyid Javadi, Haft daftar-i Siyasi-i Junbish (Fall 1357). See also idem, Daftarha-yi Ingilab (Tehran: Junbush Press, 1358).

³³Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, pp. 496-502.

³⁴Ibid.; see also Keddie, Roots of Revolution (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), chap. 1. Any book written by oppositionists, whether Marxist or non-Marxist, could not be sold or read. If it was discovered, the result was arbitrary arrest, torture, and kidnapping, and destruction in most circumstances. The word Garbzadagi, which is the name of a book by Al Ahmad, the great critical Iranian intellectual thinker, is translated by Nikki R. Keddie as "Westoxication," the favoring of Western ideas.

³⁵Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development, p. 298.

³⁶See Abrahamian, "Strengths and Weaknesses of the Labor Movement in Iran, 1941-1953," in Continuity and Change in Modern Iran ed. Michael E. Bonine and Nikki Keddie (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), pp. 181-202. See also Assef Bayat, Workers and Revolution in Iran (London: Zed Books, 1987), esp. chap. 6, "The Industrial Working Class in the Revolution." They made all "wheels" to stand "still" (pp. 77-99).

³⁷See, for example, Bahman Niramand, Iran: The New Imperialism in Action (New York: Monthly Review, 1969), pp. 44-45. For a detailed and excellent analysis, see Keddie, Roots, chap. 6. See also Mohammad Mosaddegh, Khatirat va ta'allumat-i Dr. Mohammad Mosaddegh [Memories and Pains of Dr. Mohammad Mosaddegh], ed. Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Intesharat Elmi, 1358), pp. 227-34.

³⁸International Labor Office, Labor Conditions in the Oil Industry in Iran (Geneva: 1950), pp. 34-35, 56.

³⁹Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions, p. 269.

⁴⁰See M. Mosaddegh, Notgha va Maktobat-i Doctor Mosaddegh, vol. 8 (1972), pp. 59-62.

⁴¹Halliday, Iran, p. 25.

⁴²See Mosaddegh, Khaterat va Tullomat-i Dr. Mohammad Mosaddegh ed. E. Afshar (Tehran: Elmi Press, 1358), pp. 258-262.

⁴³Ibid., chapters 3 and 4.

⁴⁴Halliday, Iran, p. 25. See also Katouzian, Political Economy, p. 168.

⁴⁵Mossadegh, Khaterat, p. 337. See also Bizhan Jazani, Tarikh-i Si Salaich-i Iran (Tehran: n.p., 37-8-4), p. 44.

⁴⁶Kermit Roosevelt, Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), introduction.

⁴⁷For information on the massive corruption and the money brought out of the country at the beginning of the revolution, see IRANshahr, no. 10, (1978):8; no. 9 (December 22, 1978):4; no. 13 (December 1, 1978):6. See also Ett Laat #16039, 10/1358, p. 10, Bani Sadre's news conference.

⁴⁸Mehdi Bazargan, Inqilab-i Iran dar du harakat (Tehran: Naragi Publication, 1363), pp. 11-24.

⁴⁹Katouzian, Political Economy, pp. 213-17.

⁵⁰Ahmad Farouhy, Iran Erupts, ed. Ali-Reza Nobari, pp. 51-78. According to Farouhy, the struggle for liberty and liberation from domination has never ceased.

CHAPTER V

1. INTRODUCTION: PERSPECTIVES ON STATE-CENTERED THEORY

Since political class struggle revolves around the state and great social revolutions have been state centered, it is appropriate to very briefly analyze and clarify problems surrounding the theory of the state. According to one school of thought, the state exists because class antagonism is irreconcilable.¹ Hence, the existence of the state bears evidence to class conflict. If the reconciliation of this conflict were possible, then the institution of the state would be useless. Therefore, the definition of the state as a class institution can be empirically validated. Having a monopoly over the means of coercion, it has always worked to preserve the vested interests and the dominant ideology. The oppressed classes, especially the working class, have paid with their blood in order to protect human decency and promote democratic ideals. According to Althusser, "The massacres of June 1848 and of the Paris commune, of Bloody Sunday, May 1905 in Petrograd, of the Resistance, of charouni," censorship, thought control, imperial wars, militarization, and counterrevolutionary activism, all lend support to the argument that the state is bound to contain class struggle in the interests of a class in domination.²

It can be argued that the overriding concern of the state in a capitalist society is to serve the interests of the capitalist class; hence "the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."³ Indeed, interpretation of this Marxian notion of "superstructure" has led to development of the instrumentalist approach. This perspective sees the

state as an "instrument" in the hands of the dominant capitalist class -- simply because the state is controlled by the capitalist class. The state, however, is dedicated to the maintenance of the dynamics of capitalism, which includes capital accumulation and profit maximization for the corporate-dominant capitalist class. The state cannot honor popular demands for fundamental social change over the politicoeconomic interests of the dominant class.

Historical evidence substantiates this analysis. When, for instance, the Left, through a popular democratic election, came to office in Chile, the confidence of the dominant capitalist class was soon eroded. This erosion forced this class to ally itself immediately with the corporate owners, whose exploitation of Chile's resources was also threatened. The objectives of Allende's socialist government included policies which aimed at high levels of employment, redistribution of income, elimination of poverty, improvement of the quality of life, better social services, and so on. Such programs would obviously shift income from the dominant class to the laboring classes, a result that explains why the destiny of Allende's democratic government was preordained.⁴

If the state were not the instrument of the dominant capitalist class, and its function were to realize national interests, which are tied up with capitalistic enterprise, what would happen if the idea of distribution to each according to his work, became prevalent? Why, whenever the voices from below advance the claim that their national as well as self-interests could be better realized by the socialization of the means of production, do they face antagonistic reactions? Do they not intend to structure just social relations free from

domination, contradictions, and exploitation? What is wrong with this formulation? The problem stems from the fact that the capitalist state negates progressive change; it tends to perpetuate the status quo, which benefits the capitalistic and ruling classes. The major goal of the state then becomes to contain class struggle, to perpetuate the hegemony of the dominant capitalist class. It is for these reasons that some Marxist scholars subscribe to the instrumentalist thesis.⁵

The instrumentalist thesis is best explained by Ralph Miliband. His formulation can be neatly summed up as follows: "In the Marxist scheme, the 'ruling class' of capitalist society is that class which is able, by virtue of the economic power thus conferred upon it, to use the state as its instrument for the domination of society."⁶ In a similar vein, Paul Sweezy argues that the state is "an instrument in the hands of the ruling classes for enforcing and guaranteeing the stability of the class structure itself."⁷ These arguments agree that the state, by definition, is one class's "instrument" or tool to dominate another class. It actively challenges and contains class conflict, playing a critical role in manipulating people's ideas and involving every dimension of economic life. It is an institution which serves the interests of the dominant class. Indeed, the exercise of power by those who are in possession of key political institutions, either by manipulative means or by the strict application of economic coercion and political pressure, fits the theme of instrumentalism. However, if we accept the argument that the existence of the state proves the irreconcilability of class struggle and that its function is to further and maintain the interests of the dominant class, then the

emancipation of the oppressed classes cannot be realized except by a social revolution and the destruction of the state apparatus.⁸

It is true that the aim of a capitalistic state is to preserve the social relations of capitalist production and to perpetuate the socioeconomic and political interests of the capitalist class or structures in dominance. It is equally true that the interests of the state may or may not necessarily coincide with those of the dominant class, which owns the means of production. The state thus has to be to some degree relatively autonomous, and this relative autonomy becomes an alternative analytical framework. This framework is utilized by the structuralist school of thought.⁹

According to Poulantzas, the leading structuralist, the functions of the state are not determined by the class in power. Rather, they are determined by the structures of society. Hence, structuralist analysis concentrates on the class structure and contradictions anchored within the capitalistic mode of production.¹⁰ Structuralists tend to look at how the state resolves these contradictions. This is important, indeed, since the state's elimination or neutralization of these contradictions determines the reproduction of the capitalist system. In capitalist society, the critical contradiction lies in the social relations of production, on the one hand, and in surplus private appropriation, on the other. This problem, in fact, poses a serious threat to the capitalistic system because it leads to the mobilization and political activism of the working class. When confronted by the united front of the laboring class, the capitalist class fails to contain the class struggle waged by the workers. In such circumstances, the state

may play a decisive role in mediating the conflict and restoring unity to social formations.¹¹

Two points have to be considered carefully. First, if the contradiction between the opposing classes is logically and scientifically real, then its reconciliation in a Marxian sense is simply impossible. It can be resolved only by rooting it out, that is, by abolishing the class in domination. How then can the state promote social unity? And even if it does, in whose interest is it working? Obviously, that of the dominant class. The state somehow individualizes and "autonomizes" the laboring class through pay raises, the degree of social justice, and the like, thereby transforming the political antagonism of the working class into a narrow-based interest group conflict. The question then becomes whether concessions of any kind can abolish exploitation and domination of one class by another. If the answer is positive, then the logic of dialectical analysis should be totally ignored. Yet, the scientific nature of dialectical logic, with respect to on-going critical sociopolitical and economic crises, to massive unemployment problems, to domination of the peripheries, can hardly be disputed as far as the state's mediation of conflict is concerned. As a matter of fact, the capitalist state manipulates the laboring class, through wage increases and other incentives, extracting support in turn, which is essential for private accumulation. Thus, the state obviously intends to preserve the existing order rather than let it be transformed radically by forces from below.¹²

The concept of relative autonomy leads the structuralists to neglect the underlying question regarding which classes are potentially capable of shaping

the state machinery and ordering it into action for their own interest. In other words, the power of the state to solve contradictions of capital does not seem to emanate from the masses, but from those who are either ruling class or those operating invisibly behind the political scene. Thus, the status quo most obviously benefits the ruling and dominant capitalistic classes. State structures are designed to deradicalize and depoliticize the working class and challenges from below and make the state invulnerable to the political struggle. Hence, the state, in class struggle, cannot be seen as a neutral institution. True, the bourgeois class is a highly fragmented class with diverse political and economic interests; but when, ideologically speaking, the prevailing mode of thought is in jeopardy, regardless of the level of fragmentation, this class will unite to defend and preserve the status quo.¹³

In short, despite the analytical and theoretical merits of both schools of thought, each suffers from a number of weaknesses. For instance, if the state is not a tool of the ruling class, then it should be under the control of the working class. But note that the adoption of either argument may well result in reductionism. However, the structural mechanism of the superstructure is so designed that, whether it is a tool of the ruling class or whether it has a degree of relative autonomy, the state, by preserving class distinctions, serves the ends of the dominant classes.¹⁴

Skocpol strongly opposes the instrumentalism perspective.¹⁵ Her formulation is modeled after structuralist analysis. Criticizing the theoretical inadequacy of the instrumentalist perspective, she sees the state as "relatively

autonomous." It is in the light of the state's relative autonomy from the dominant capitalistic class that she reasons one can study analytically the prevailing "interactions" between these two structures. In times of externally generated political crisis, these interactions may lead to contradictions, which can be resolved by compelling the state to act either against or for the interests of the dominant forces.¹⁶ This analysis will be further developed when the analysis of the Skocpolean theory of revolution is investigated further. Here, suffice it to say that state-centered analysis of revolution has an important analytical value.

2. THE SKOCPOLEAN THEORY OF REVOLUTION

The approaches already examined are either too descriptive or too abstract and oversimplified to explain the dynamics of the most systemic type of revolution, for instance, the social revolution, which changes the sociopolitical structures of a society and is accompanied by a class-based movement from below. Even though proponents of these theoretical approaches have developed sophisticated frameworks for analysis, they fail to account effectively for the outcomes of different social movements. These general theories of revolution do not explain why certain rebellions remain rebellions while others become great social revolutions. It is no wonder, therefore, that, notwithstanding their merits, few empirical analyses employing these general theories reveal the structural causes of great social revolutions. It is because of the failure of general theories that we return to the "world historical context" model.

In actuality, Theda Skocpol's theory is an outstanding achievement among the endeavors of the world historical context theorists. She skillfully synthesizes the class approach with a world historical context analysis, a more state-centered approach. Her theoretical formulation is rich in empirical and historical content. She seeks not only to explain why revolutions occur, but also to predict the possible outcomes of movements as such. Her approach has been tested against French, Russian, and Chinese experiences. The empirical and historical evidence derived from the analysis of social revolutions in these countries properly supports the theoretical validity of Skocpol's formulation.

However, this formulation, in spite of its theoretical virtues, when applied to the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, suffers certain setbacks. Before attempting to test this proposition against the Iranian experience, it is appropriate to briefly analyze the Skocpolean theory of revolution and then subject her theoretical premises to empirical scrutiny derived from the Iranian case.

The theory maintains that it is impossible for a revolution to occur as long as the prerevolutionary repressive forces of the state are in firm control. The most basic precondition for the outbreak of a revolution is the development of a rupture in the state and a breakup of the internal forces of domination.¹⁷ How, then, can the state be weakened so that the situation is ripe for a revolutionary upheaval? Skocpol's answer to this question constitutes the most fundamental feature of revolution. In her view, pressures from the international environment play a key triggering role. Hence, external military pressure accompanied by a political split between the state and the dominant classes, especially the landed

class, can be seen as a revolution-activating critical variable. Without it revolutionary mass political action cannot overcome the repression exercised by the armed state apparatus. Therefore, it is by weakening the state's monopoly on coercion and breaking down its repression that one can talk about a revolutionary upheaval from below.¹⁸

In Skocpol's opinion, social formations in which revolutions have taken place are predominantly bureaucratic-agrarian societies. In such formations, a centralized bureaucratic state is sustained with the assistance of big landlords and surplus extraction from the agricultural economy. When pressure is exerted by the international environment--in the form of war, invasion, or military competition--a conflict may develop between the central government and landlords over the distribution of surplus extracted from the rural economy on which both social classes depend for survival. At the same time, the necessity to maximize surplus, by virtue of foreign intrusion, or further extraction from the peasantry may aggravate and intensify resentment on the part of the peasant class. It should be emphasized, however, that the discontent generated cannot undermine the military institution of the state; but, when the state is caught between military competition or external intrusion, on the one hand, and pressure applied by the prevailing political and class struggles within the agrarian context, on the other, a revolutionary situation is encouraged. Hence, it was the dynamism of competitive European states that activated the three great social revolutions of the French, the Russian, and the Chinese. The inability of France, Russia, and China to defend themselves against the aggression of powerful states created

fiscal crisis and led to the disintegration of their coercive apparatus for domination.¹⁹

In short, external military pressures, accompanied by internal political factionalism between the dominant class and the state, are necessary for the breakdown of state repression and the subsequent explosion of a revolutionary uprising from below. Therefore, if the contradictions rooted in sociopolitical and economic structures are preconditions for revolution, international pressures function as the trigger of revolution.

Who are the agents of revolution? Skocpol's final proposition in connection with this question is that peasants constitute a disruptive social force, and, historically, they have played a crucial role in bringing about social revolutions. Yet, she does not exclude the proletarian class as a locomotive force behind social revolutions. She is convinced that the occurrence of social revolution is possible only if a politically organized autonomous peasantry coincides with an incapacitated state. The incapacitation syndrome is caused by the tension-inducing international system, which brings its contradictions to bear on disadvantageously located states.²⁰ This eliminates the capacity of the state to repress the peasantry, which is the agent of social revolution. Thus, mass-based revolutions have taken place only if the breakdown of the institutions of the old regime has occurred in an agrarian context in which the peasants, as a producing class, possess enough politicoeconomic autonomy to rise up against their landlord exploiters.²¹ The French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions provide empirical evidence. France, Russia, and China, by virtue of their agrarian structures and

uneven development, were ripe for social revolutions. They were confronted by economic problems which were aggravated and exacerbated by short-term failures in agricultural output or by defeat in war, and by imperial intrusions. The structural split in these countries facilitated the antiaristocratic movement and eventually led to the outbreak of social revolution.²²

Finally, for Skocpol, neither a mass ideological shift nor the volition of a revolutionary leader matters in mass political mobilization. Leadership, in her view, has often been absent from the scene of mass-based political action or it has been politically insignificant until the breakdown of the prerevolutionary regime. Unlike those theorists who assign a primary role to leadership in revolutionary mass movement, she, with Wendell Phillips, believes that "revolutions are not made. They come."²³

3. SKOCPOL'S THEORY AND THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

As mentioned earlier, the first important theoretical proposition of Skocpolean formulation is the "collapse" or "incapacitation" or decline of coercive controlling power. Actually, the occurrence of social revolutions in France, Russia, and China provides empirical data for the confirmation of this most critical defining proposition. But our hypothesis here is that this formulation is incompatible with the reality of the Iranian regime in 1978-1979.

To begin with, the Shah of Iran was an absolute monarch with incredible control over a highly centralized, modernized military institution and a highly sophisticated and repressive secret police. He was more powerful than his

counterparts, that is, the French, Russian, and Chinese monarchs, primarily because he had an extremely well-trained and highly organized army, who had purchased \$20 billion worth of American arms between 1972 and 1977. He had decided to transform Iran into the most highly advanced and powerful military machine in the world. According to Anthony Sampson, by 1974, following the oil boom, half of the Pentagon's arms exports were going to Iran.²⁴ Beginning in this year, the country was spending 32 to 35 percent of its total annual budget on defense. In 1976, Iran's military expenditure was equal to that of the People's Republic of China, yet Iran had only one-tenth the number of soldiers: 300,000 in Iran to 3,000,000 in China. Per capita spending on defense in Iran amounted to \$314, whereas in China, it was only \$12.²⁵ Iran also spent more than Great Britain on defense, even though the British GNP in 1976 was more than five times higher than the GNP of Iran.²⁶

As oil prices increased the country's income from \$6.3 billion in 1973 to \$22 billion in 1974, the Shah's purchase of more sophisticated American military weaponry also increased. In addition to 80 Grumman F-14 Tomcat fighter planes, the Shah bought 160 F-16 fighters at a cost of \$3.2 billion; McDonnell-Douglas F-15 Eagle fighters; 209 F-4 Phantom-bombers for \$1 billion; 141 F-5E for \$285 million; and F-5F fighters for \$80 million. Furthermore, he ordered 202 Cobra helicopter gunships for \$367 million; troop-carrying helicopters for about \$96 million; 25,000 antitank missiles for \$150 million; 50 50C-130 Hercules transport jets for \$203 million; and 2,616 Sparrow air-to-air missiles for \$522 million. In spite of having the biggest naval fleet in the world,

he ordered 4 more spruance missile destroyers for \$1.5 billion from the United States. If we add to these purchases other items such as "transport planes" and "armored personnel carriers," the cost of arming internally based security forces, the police, the gendarmerie, and an "electronic aerial defense system," which included air-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles and the development of a \$500 million monitoring system, the military costs became too great to calculate.²⁷ The electronic surveillance system ordered by the Shah (Ibex) was designed to monitor and intercept civil and military communications of neighboring countries, especially the Soviet Union. Table 1 details U.S. military sales to Iran.

Table 1
U.S. Military Sales to Iran 1950-1978

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sales (millions of current \$)</u>
1950-1969	741.2
1970	134.9
1971	393.9
1972	472.6
1973	2,171.4
1974	4,325.4
1975	2,447.1
1976	1,794.5
1977	5,713.8
1978	2,586.9
1950-1978	20,751.7

Source: Klare, American Arms Supermarket, p. 109.

The regime got everything but the atomic bomb, and the weapons it purchased were more advanced than those utilized by NATO. The "wish list" of arms purchases was endless. (For a detailed listing of arms purchases, see Appendix A.)

This is a clear indication of the sophisticated and advanced nature of the Shah's military institutions. Yet his military had not suffered a defeat in a war imposed on it by a hostile international environment, nor were there pressures from abroad to undermine his regime or to provoke antagonism between the regime and the dominant classes. In addition to internal repressive control, his machinery was even suppressing the nationalist forces in Oman. For him, the development and the claim of the alternative progressive forces to power in the region in general and Oman in particular was unacceptable. So he sent thousands of Iranian forces there and maintained them in Dhofar until the end of 1976. He withdrew the troops only after the nationalistic movement was defeated.²⁸

The analysis presented is incompatible with Skocpol's incapacitation proposition, for there was, as shown, no sign of declining power, no defeatism, and no international hostility toward the military and political institutions of the Shah. There was, rather, massive military build up and coercive power institutionalization which was believed to be unprecedented in the history of the country. Hence, the incapacitation thesis does not hold up. What is more, the international environment was enormously cooperative and friendly to the Shah. In 1941, the Allied Forces brought him to power and helped him to consolidate his power and crush oppositional nationalist forces. It was, indeed, the active

support of the United States that led to the 1953 coup and the consolidation of the Shah's power. Sherman tanks were used in both 1951 and 1953 to defeat Mosaddegh's liberal and constitutional government. Subsequently, massive U.S. military, economic, and political support enabled the Shah to create order and stability.²⁹ Given the Pahlavi regime's lack of popular support, it was absolutely essential for the Shah to depend on the United States for his preservation. His security was possible only by expanding the base of terror. Following the Mosaddegh episode during the era of power consolidation, the notorious SAVAK (Sazman-i Ettel-aat va Amni at-i Keshvar, or the National Information and Security Organization, founded in 1957) was established under the direct supervision of the CIA and the FBI.³⁰ Both provided SAVAK with invaluable assistance. It was also helped and equipped by the Mosad, the Israeli Intelligence Service. Prominent agents of SAVAK were trained mostly in the United States. The CIA also developed the "electronic surveillance national security agency" with SAVAK.³¹

In reality, the Shah's regime was a dependent state, the defense, survivability, and continuity of which depended on external support as well as on the utilization of controlled repression. It annihilated and demobilized politically conscious Iranians. To secure its own continuity, the Shah's state had to maintain the subordination of otherwise insubordinate forces. The need to contain the class struggle in society was the more urgent because the class that dominated society did not possess a mass following to legitimize its rule. The ruling class in Iran,

therefore, depended for support on the security forces trained and armed by its external class allies.

The Iranian system under the Shah was thus a dependent one, though not primarily economically. The support it received from the West, especially from the United States, was crucial to its security. From 1941 to the Shah's fall in 1979, Iran was closely tied, both militarily and politically, to the metropolitan bourgeoisie, chief among them that of the United States. If Iran had not been supported by the United States in the post-World War II era, the Iranian state and with it probably capitalism may well have been overthrown.³²

It follows that the Skocpolean notion of external pressure to weaken internal coercive power structures does not apply to pre-1978-1979 revolutionary Iran. In the Iranian case, internal structures were reinforced and strengthened by the support received from external imperial power elites. Hence, there is no evidence to prove the application of negative or hostile policy measures from outside toward the Iranian system before the Revolution. What was observable was the spirit of cooperation and continued mutual contributions. For example, the Shah, in addition to excessive purchase of weaponry from the U.S., which was a great contribution to the reduction of the burden of American expenditure on the development of weaponry and economically beneficial to its failing economy, kept the country open to the investment of the U.S. and Western multinationals. He created a huge consumer market for Western goods and followed the strategy of capitalist development. By 1976 Iran employed 24,000 to 45,000 American military advisors, technicians, and engineers. This number was expected to reach

50,000 to 60,000 by 1980.³³ By 1976, the Shah's regime signed at least twenty-five military contracts with the U. S. Department of Defense for technical services and training purposes. "These included everything from a one-year \$400,000 Hughes contract for 'assistance and support on the air-to-surface missile' to the mammoth \$225 million Bell contract to 'train 1,500 helicopter pilots and 5,000 mechanics, and to develop a logistics system and depot overhaul facility' for the 489 Bell helicopters ordered by Iran in 1973."³⁴ More importantly, the Shah utilized the U.S.-trained and the armed military and secret police to serve the American ideology of antinationalism, anticommunism, and antiliberationism. Being the head of a dependent state, he was an important tool of American foreign policy. Whenever there was a conflict between freedom and nonfreedom, nationalism and subordination, radicalism and conservatism, transformation and counterinsurgency, he always took the side of the latter choice. He used SAVAK, the CIA, and Mosad-supplied intelligence to eliminate alternative democratic forces. This strategy was extremely important because at the time of a fall, the power vacuum could be immediately filled up by the procapital reaction rather than by democratic forces. Such a policy was indeed highly valued and admired by American Republican administrations to which he was greatly indebted.

According to Richard Falk, the goal of the Shah's repressive military and security institutions "was to build a Middle East alliance of reactionary forces in the region to contain radical challenges and to undergird the security of Israel. The Egyptian-Israeli accord must be understood as the latest episode in that strategic quest."³⁵ This objective, in fact, was clearly reflected by the U.S.

Senate: "If Iran is called up to intervene in the internal affairs of any Gulf state, it must be recognized in advance by the United States that this is the role for which Iran is being primed and blame cannot be assigned for Iran's carrying out an implied assignment."³⁶

It follows that the Iranian regime was closely tied to U.S. power and hegemony, and that the political aim of the United States in the spirit of the Nixon Doctrine was that it really needed a "surrogate" or "client" or a dependent state which would promote stability and order in a highly volatile region which was extremely vital to the United States' hegemonic corporate interests. The Shah, indeed, was expected to protect the Persian Gulf, specifically, the strategic Hormuz Strait, through which passed oil to the West. Because 60 percent of the world's proven oil reserves are concentrated in the Middle East,³⁷ stability in the Gulf region was highly important to the West. More importantly, the power vacuum created by the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf needed to be filled. The strategic interests of the energy-consuming West would be in jeopardy if the flow of oil was cut off. If the strait was blocked, millions of workers would lose their jobs in the West and Japan, thus stifling capitalism in the metropolis.³⁸

Actually the Shah himself made all foreign policy decisions. He needed no approval. His henchmen endorsed whatever he did. He utilized the country's politicomilitary institutions and economic resources to replace the British in the Gulf, to defend and enhance the interests of Western oligarchies. Consequently, the American government, business-based corporations, and imperial forces strongly supported him. Moreover, the Shah's armed forces too

remained loyal to him to the very end. They supported the Shah's political designs.³⁹ This analysis clearly repudiates the Skocpolean pressure-from-outside propositions. Hence, it was not external pressure factors which led to the incapacitation of the Shah's regime.

Furthermore, the repressive Iranian apparatus was relatively autonomous from the dominant socioeconomic classes. Yet the Shah's security and military institutions firmly supported the interests of the dominant internal forces and those of the metropolitan bourgeoisie. In reality, the ruling class in Iran used military institutions internally to eliminate oppositional forces and suppress any political action against the dominant will. Since the army had very weak links, if any, with the landed oligarchic class, it closely identified itself with the Shah. The centralization of power in the Shah and his control of the military and security institutions enabled him to control the armed forces effectively and to isolate them from political affairs. This elevated him to total domination over the country.⁴⁰ This argument too defeats Skocpol's perception that it is weakness which leads to revolution and not repression.⁴¹

In contrast to Skocpol's theoretical vision, in Iran, unlike in France and China, the landed class was not sufficiently powerful to resist or block the ability of the externally supported regime of the Shah to implement reform programs in response to the threat coming from below. If the cause of the breakdown of the elite's repressive social control, which led, based on Skocpol's argument, to the disruption of the prevailing orders in the French and Chinese formations, this really was not the case with Iran. The ruling class of Iran

initiated reform programs from above which, at least in the short run, as the result of a class alliance, strengthened the Shah's political position. In addition, the Shah's regime converted those landed classes into a newly rising bourgeois capitalist force. Thus, this class did not pose a threat to the Shah nor was it able politically to block his policy measures. Again, if in Russia, the capacity of the ruling elite to wage the costly war imposed on it was undermined by the agrarian class structure, this really does not apply to Iran either.⁴²

Moreover, according to Skocpol, if incapacitation is caused by the combination of external and internal structural contradictions accompanied by peasant rebellion and elite agrarian class structure, the occurrence of revolution is inevitable.⁴³ Iranian revolution in reality does not conform to this theoretical expectation either. As a matter of fact, the military machinery of the Shah utilized the country's politicomilitary institutions and economic resources to defend and enhance the interests of Western oligarchies. Consequently, the international environment was enormously cooperative and friendly to him. His armed forces remained loyal to him to the very end. But, like the Shah himself, they lived in a state of confusion.

The military machinery of the Shah was financed by petrodollars. Hence, the Shah did not need to extract surplus from the peasantry. According to Skocpol, excessive spending as a result of military competition involves more extraction of surplus from peasants. This may intensify or provoke discontent. As mentioned earlier, the Shah was independent of both the peasant and the landlord classes. He even implemented a land reform program which destroyed

the local power base of the feudal lords and attracted the support and loyalty of the newly emerging landed peasantry. The landlords, in turn, emerged as a rich bourgeoisie. The Shah had expanded his power to rural areas as well and there existed no immediate antagonism to the rule of the central government. Thus, Skocpol's proposition that military competition from the international environment involves greater expenditure on military machinery, which, in turn, leads to the imposition of further taxes on the landlord and peasantry, or intolerable extraction of surplus from these classes and therefore the development of factionalism between the ruling class and dominant forces, has no foundation in the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979.

Skocpol admits that her theory explains only the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions and thus cannot be applied beyond these countries, for every social formation has a particular historical and international setting of its own.⁴⁴ Even in physics there does not exist a general theory which would explain everything. Nonetheless, her emphasis on the historical development of social formations, class analysis, and, above all, the international impact on social revolutions is indeed a powerful defining variable and needs to be incorporated into any theoretical formulation.

Notwithstanding the theoretical merits of Skocpolean analysis, in an article on the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, Skocpol undermines the theoretical validity of these sets of variables just mentioned. She sharply criticizes general theories of revolution in that these theories see modernization as a contributing factor in revolution. Unfortunately, in her article on Iran, she falls

into the same trap, thus leaving aside uneven capitalistic development, class relations, dependency factors, imperial domination, and so on.

Modernization, it should be stressed, has become the theology of capitalism. On the one hand, it encourages change, arguing that attachment to parochialism, nostalgic regression, deference to traditionalism, old norms, and so on, all constitute formidable impediments to great-leap-forward attitudes. Hence, the horizon of narrow-mindedness and blinded dogmatism got to be progressively and radically narrowed down. On the other hand, the modernization theory limits the scope of change. It, in fact, assumes a sort of mystification process. It argues for attitudinal, habitual, technical, and practical changes and provides for modern outlooks. At the same time, it applies restrictions on the fundamentally reasonable transformation of prevalent socioeconomic and political relations, for fundamental change would interfere with the vested interests, which cannot be tolerated. As a model of social change, modernization is crude and above all apolitical and ahistorical. It tends to ignore the historical, political, and dialectical development of human society. It is a kind of ideology which condemns living in the past and at the same time sees the present as a manifestation of perfection. In reality, the theory aims at breaking the existing links with the past without creating the future. It is formulated, therefore, to preserve the existing capitalist relations of production.⁴⁵

Social revolutions, by Skocpol's definition, tend to radically transform the prevailing sociopolitical and economic relations. Can modernization theory, with its obvious conservative ideology, implement the same function or lead to

the same ends? The answer is no. Then how could the Iranian Revolution, which she characterizes as a social revolution, fit the modernization theory? The Iranian Revolution, as she argues, seems to be "a product of rapid modernization."⁴⁶ If we define the Iranian Revolution in terms of modernization, we may lose sight of other critically contributing variables that Skocpol skillfully introduces into the vocabulary of revolutionary movements. The concept "modernization" indeed has no place in an explanation of Iran's 1978-1979 popular uprising.

For a moment, assume that Skocpol is right in attributing the Iranian Revolution to rapid modernization and socioeconomic development. If the causal factor behind the Iranian Revolution was the modernization variable, then what triggered early historical struggles (e.g., in the 1890s, 1900s, and early 1960s) against the regimes in domination? The class alliances that have in one way or another challenged the ruling strata were not followed by modernization programs in the past.⁴⁷ Hence, modernization is simply irrelevant to the explanation of a revolution. In reality, revolution in Iran took place neither as a result of rapid development nor "underdevelopment," but of uneven development.⁴⁸ In addition, the Shah, as Skocpol rightly argues, did not have a solid social base in Iran. But she fails to point out that when the leadership is cut off from its people, it has no choice but to depend on external forces, as well as on repressive internal social control. The Shah's mainstay, as mentioned earlier, was the Western powers and the oppressive structures created by imperialism. Even the armed forces were called the Imperial Army and not the People's Army. To maintain himself in power and to suppress any liberation movement, the Shah needed to consolidate

his power, which he thought he could do by building up the military. But this required the recruitment of U.S. advisors or what is called "white collar mercenaries."⁴⁹ This strategy led to further dependency and neocolonialism, which further intensified ongoing antagonism.

Uneven development and dependency with their resultant imperialistic hegemony and domination, rather than the concept of modernization, were key factors in the Iranian Revolution. Skocpol fails to realize that the most important feature of Iranian culture is that it is independently induced and institutionalized. It is a culture which is closed to external intrusion. This explains why it reacts sharply to imperial domination. Iran's twenty-five hundred years of history, regardless of centralization or democratization principles, include independent political development. It is simply unrealistic to ignore the validity of centuries-old internalized sociopolitical and cultural development so far as societal integration is concerned. Independent continuity has been a source of pride. That is why cultural, political, and economic domination and the integration of Iran into capitalism have always met with challenges from below. Mongols invaded the country, making minarets from the heads of Iranians. Arabs conquered Iran, staying there for 200 years. Yet all attempts failed to change the Iranian mentality. All invaders failed to rob the Iranians of their national identity and independence. No wonder, then, that since the advent of Western capitalism and its intervention in Iran, social struggle against Western domination and the ruling class has never ceased. Hence, Skocpol should have assigned a primary

role to the concept of political dependency. This variable played an extremely important role in the Iranian Revolution. (See Appendix B.)

In spite of a favorable international environment, the Shah and his coercive forces were incapacitated and had to yield to a class-based revolutionary movement from below. The revolution, though Islamic, was fed by the ideology of imperialist domination, and leadership made an important contribution to the mass mobilization. Hence, the Iranian Revolution, in a sense, was made and did not simply happen. This stands in sharp contradiction to the Skocpolean theoretical conviction that revolutions come and are not made. Her theory is also inconsistent with the Iranian case in that it does not assign any value whatsoever to the evolution of leadership and ideological dynamics, both of which played critical roles in the Iranian Revolution. Moreover, according to Skocpol's formulation, social revolutions and popular upheavals have taken place mostly in rural areas affected by modernizing social change. This was not the case in Iran. There it was not only one class that initiated the revolution, nor was the revolution triggered in rural areas. Skocpol in her article on the Iranian Revolution argues that the peasants did not constitute the major factor in that revolution. Instead, she states that the opposition to the late Shah was urban centered. But again she overlooks the fact that the Iranian Revolution was a popular, nationwide movement in which all of Iran's oppressed classes participated. As Eric Hooglund argues, the villages also participated in the revolutionary fermentation. He refers to the fact that, in some villages, there even occurred "demonstrations -- and

confrontations -- as frequently as there were in towns." This is evidence that the Iranian Revolution was a national, all-embracing upheaval.⁵⁰

In spite of these weaknesses, Skocpol's theory, as opposed to general theories of revolution, is rich in content. It is state-centered, class-based, and historically bound. While general theories of revolution are conservative, trying to maintain, perpetuate, and solidify the existing capitalistic order, Skocpol's theory sees nothing "permanent under the sun."⁵¹ Rather, it aims at explaining an actual revolutionary change within the context of historical development. In the last analysis, though, perhaps compelled by the negative circumstances, she too, fails to embrace the social reality fully, perhaps because of reversion Skocpol makes in Marxian long-lasting and unchallengeable ideas, for example, contradictions of capitalistic mode of production. Nevertheless, her B variables (see figure 2 in introduction) remain important analytical tools in explaining social revolutions, and, hence, have to be considered in theory building.

ENDNOTES

¹ V.I. Lenin, State and Revolution: Marxist Teaching about the Theory of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), chap. 1.

² Louis Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), pp. 137-58.

³ Marx and Engels, Communist Manifesto (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 82.

⁴ Fred Block, "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State," Socialist Revolution 7, 33 (May-June 1977):6-28. For a good account of the instrumentalist thesis, see Gosta Esping-Anderson, Roger Friedland, Erik Olin Wright, "Modes of Class Struggle and the Capitalist State," in Kapitalstate, no. 4-5C (Summer, 1976):186-220.

⁵ See Ralph Miliband, "State Power and Class Interests," New Left Review, no. 138 (March-April, 1983):57-68; Paul Sweezy, Theory of Capitalist Development (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1942); Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks (London & New York: International Publishers, 1975), p. 238; Jack Woddis, Armies and Politics (New York: International Publishers, 1977), chap. 2.

⁶ R. Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society (New York: Basic Books, 1969), p. 23

⁷ Sweezy, Theory of Capitalist Development, p. 243.

⁸ Lenin, State and Revolution, chap. 1.

⁹ Nicos Poulantzas, State, Power, Socialism (London: Verso, 1980). See also Louis Althusser, "Contradiction and Overcontradiction," in his book For Marx (London: Verso, 1979), pp. 89-115.

¹⁰ Poulantzas, "The Problem of the Capitalist State," New Left Review 58 (1969):119-29

¹¹ See Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," New Left Review 74 (July-August 1972):59-81. See also Clause Offe, "The Capitalist State and the Problem of Policy Formation," in ed. Leon Lindberg Stress and Contradiction in Contemporary Capitalism, (London:

Lexington Books, 1975), pp. 105-144; and Volker Ronge, "Those on the Theory of the State," New German Critique 6 (Fall 1975):137-47.

¹²See note 4. For a critical analysis, see Val Burris, "Introduction: The Structuralist Influence in Marxist Theory and Research," The Insurgent Sociologist 9, 1 (Summer 1974):4-17.

¹³See Esping-Anderson, Friedland, Wright, "Modes of Class Struggle"; James Petras, "Neo-Fascism: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle in the Third World," Journal of Contemporary Asia 10 (1980):119-29. For an excellent critique, see Ernesto Laclau, "The Specificity of the Political: The Poulantzas-Miliband Debate," Economy and Society 4:1 (1975):87-110.

¹⁴E. P. Thompson, "The Secret State," in Race and Class 20, 3 (1979):219-242. See also Block, "The Ruling Class...," pp. 12-14. For a better understanding of ongoing debate over the "superstructure," see Martin Carnoy, The State and Political Theory (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).

¹⁵Ellen Kay Trimberger, Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1978). Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

¹⁶See Theda Skocpol and Ellen Kay Trimberger, "Revolutions and the World-Historical Development of Capitalism," Berkeley Journal of Sociology 22 (1977-1978):101-113.

¹⁷Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, pp. 19-24.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 24-33.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, chap. 2; see also Skocpol and Trimberger, "Revolutions," pp. 101-13. For an excellent but brief analysis, see Skocpol, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," Comparative Studies in Society and History 18 (1976):175-210.

²⁰Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 23.

²¹Skocpol and Trimberger, "Revolutions," pp. 107-109.

²²Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, pp. 109-11, 154.

²³Ibid., p. 17. See also her excellent article on the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, entitled, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution," Theory and Society 2 (1982):265-283.

²⁴Anthony Sampson, The Arms Bazaar (New York: Viking Press, 1977), pp. 284-289.

²⁵M. Klare, American Arms Supermarket, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), pp. 71-75. See also Hossein Bashiriyeh, The State and Revolution in Iran (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 32-36; Robert Graham, Iran: The Illusion of Power (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), pp. 168-169. In Graham's view, the Shah's expenditure on defense amounted to 35 percent of the annual budget. If we had access to SAVAK spending and confidential budgets, we would probably discover that the regime spent even more. For instance, it could easily divert allocated funds from the designated sectors to security spending. Hence it is probably misleading to say that the regime spent a fixed amount on defense systems.

²⁶Sampson, The Arms Bazaar, pp. 288-289.

²⁷For extensive information on the military buildup and defense expenditure in Iran, see Klare, American Arms Supermarket, chap. 6. See also his "Hoist with Our Own Pahlavi," Nation (January 3, 1976):110-114.

²⁸Fred Halliday, Iran, Dictatorship, and Development, (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1929), p. 51.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 90-94.

³⁰Reza Baraheni, The Crowned Cannibals: Writings on Repression in Iran (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), pp. 3-18; see also Halliday, Iran, pp. 90-91. On this account, see Graham, Iran, pp. 67-72. For more on the U.S. commitment to suppression, see Michael T. Klare and Cynthia Arnson, Supplying Repression: U.S. Support for Authoritarian Regime Abroad (Washington, D.C.: IPS, 1981), pp. 43, 45, 54-56. See also The Militant 42, 1-9 (1978).

³¹Fred Halliday, Iran, pp. 82-84.

³²Ibid., pp. 53-56.

³³Graham, Iran, pp. 174-178.

³⁴Klare, "Hoist with Our Own Pahlavi," p. 113.

³⁵Richard Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics in the Gulf," Race and Class (Summer 1979):46-47.

³⁶"Access to Oil, the U.S. Relationships with Saudi Arabia and Iran," in Staff Report, Senate Committee on Energy and Mutual Resources (Washington, D.C.: December 1977), p. 101.

³⁷See James A. Bill, "Islam, Politics, and Shi'ism in the Gulf," in Middle East Insight 3, 3 (January-February 1984):3-12, esp. p. 3.

³⁸See Andrew J. Pierre, The Global Politics of Arms Sales (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 150.

³⁹See Edward W. Said, "Iran," Columbia Journalism Review (March-April 1980):23-33. The CIA and military officials were planning to stage a coup to rescue the old order. See Richard A. Falk, "Khomeini's Promise," Foreign Policy, 34 (Spring 1979):28-34.

⁴⁰Michael T. Klare, American Arms Supermarket, chap. 6. See also Clive Y. Thomas, The Rise of the Authoritarian State in Peripheral Societies (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1984), chap. 6. Actually, the concept of Bonapartism was first invented by Karl Marx and applied to France under Bonaparte. This state was autonomous from the dominant capitalist class, though it promoted and defended that class's vested interests. It was created to repress the working class movement, which was the only way to foster appropriation of private property and the continued domination of capitalist formation. For further information, see Marx, The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (New York: International Publishers, 1984).

⁴¹Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, introduction.

⁴²For Skocpol's argument on this account, see, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," Comparative Studies in Society and History 18 (1976):175-210.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 178. See also *idem*, States and Social Revolutions, p. 41.

⁴⁴Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 288.

⁴⁵See Randall Collins, "Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions," Theory and Society 9, 4 (July 1980):647-651. See also Walter L. Goldfrank, "Commentary on Skocpol," Theory and Society 11 (1982):301-304; Nikkie R. Keddie, "Comments on Skocpol," Theory and Society 11 (1982):285-292; Egbal Ahmad, "Comments on Skocpol," Theory and Society 11 (1982):293-

300. See also Norman Long, An Introduction to the Sociology of Rural Development (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1977), chap. 2.

⁴⁶Skocpol, "Rentier State."

⁴⁷Fred Halliday, "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development and Religious Populism," Journal of International Affairs (Winter 1982/83):1-23.

⁴⁸See Abrahamian, Iran, p. 427.

⁴⁹Sampson, The Arms Bazaar, p. 292. The number of American military advisors and families was believed to be sixty thousand at the peak of the Iranian Revolution, but the figure reported by Robert Graham in Iran is twenty-four thousand (p. 177). Others like Lynn and Frankel, Imperialism vs. the Iranian Revolution: Which Side for the Working People? (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1981), listed forty-five thousand.

⁵⁰Eric J. Hooglund, Land and Revolution in Iran (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), pp. 138-152.

⁵¹This perception is reflected in "The Practical Importance of the Social Sciences," in Nikolai Bukharin, Historical Materialism (New York: International Publishers, 1928), introduction. See also his Programme of the World Revolution (Glasgow: Socialist Labour Press, 1920), pp. 7-11.

APPENDIX A

U.S. Arms Sales to Iran, 1973-1978, by Quantity and Manufacturer

Quantity	Manufacturer & Product	Delivery Date	Source
AIRCRAFT			
108 75/6	McD-D F-4E Phantom fighters	1974-75	SIPRI
36 75-7	McD-D F-4E Phantom fighters	1976-77	SIPRI
12	McD-D RF-4E Phantom tact. reconn.	(1976)	SIPRI 77
141 75-7	Northrop F-5E Tiger II fighters	1974-76	SIPRI
28 76/7	Northrop F-5F trainers	1976	SIPRI
80 75-7	Grumman F-14 Tomcat fighters	1976-78	SIPRI
160	Gen. Dynamics F-16 fighters	(1979-)	AWST 6/13/77
6 75/6	Lockheed P-3C Orion anti-sub.	1975	SIPRI
3	Lockheed P-3C Orion anti-sub.	1977	SIPRI 77
12	Lockheed C-130 transports	1974	SIPRI 75
6	Lockheed KC-135 tankers	-----	MB 75-6
6	Boeing 707-320-C tanker-transports	1974	SIPRI 75
7	Boeing 707-38JC tanker-transports	1976	SIPRI 77
7	Boeing E-3C Airborne Warning & Control Aircraft	-----	SIPRI 76
2	Airborne Recon. & Ground Process Systems	-----	OMC
31	Beech F33C Bonanza light craft	1974-75	SIPRI 75
HELICOPTERS			
202	Bell AH-1J Sea Cobra gunships	1974-77	SIPRI 75
287 75/6	Bell 214 utility	1975-77	SIPRI
39	Bell 214C utility	1977-78	SIPRI 77
6	Sikorsky S-65As	1975	SIPRI 76
6	Sikorsky RH-53Ds	1976-77	SIPRI 77
50	Boeing CH-47s	-----	MB 77-8
91 75/6	Bell-Agusta 206 Jet Rangers	-----	SIPRI
6 75/6	Bell-Agusta 212s	1976-77	SIPRI

16	Boeing-Meridionali CH-47C Chinooks	1974	SIPRI 75
22	Boeing-Meridionali CH-47C Chinooks	-----	SIPRI
75/6			
MISSILES			
280	Hughes AIM-54A Phoenix AS	1976-78	SIPRI
75/6			
2,500+	Hughes AGM-65A Maverick AS	1974-75	SIPRI 75
754	Raytheon AIM-9J Sidewinder AA	1976-78	SIPRI 77
516	Raytheon AIM-7 Sparrow AA	1976-77	SIPRI 77
222	McD-D AGM-84A Harpoon AS&ShS	-----	SIPRI
75/6			
6,200	Hughes BGM-71A TOW anti-tank	1974-77	SIPRI
75-7			
300	Hughes TOW anti-tank (partial production in Iran)	-----	OMC
634	McD-D FGM-77A Dragon anti-tank	(1977)	
----	Raytheon Improved HAWK SA sys.	-----	MB 77-8
SHIPS			
6	Ex-US Navy destroyers	1978	SIPRI 76
3	Ex-US Navy submarines	1975-76	SIPRI 76
414	Mk. 46 torpedoes	-----	SIPRI 76

Source: M. Klare & D. Volman, Arms Trade Data (Institute for Policy Studies, 1978), pp. 9-10.

Notes: SIPRI--Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Yearbook; AWST--Aviation Week and Space Technology; MB--Military Balance (annual from International Institute for Strategic Studies, London); OMC--Office of Munitions Control, State Department.

U.S. Sales of Police and Crowd Control Weapons to Iran, 1971-1978

Quantity	Item	Deliv. or	
or Price	Recipient	Implmnt.	
\$505,155	.45 cal. pistols	1/71	Army
10	.50 cal. machine guns	9/71	Army
\$300,157	.45 cal. auto. pistols	12/71	Army
\$55.7 mil.	Machine guns, med. howitz.	2/72	Army
\$44,384	.45 cal. auto. pistols	11/72	Army
4,000	.38 cal. Colt revolvers	5/73	Natl.
Pol.			
300,000	rounds .38 cal. ammo	11/73	Natl.
Pol.			
10,000	rounds .22 cal. ammo	6/74	SAVAK
250	M-113A1 APCs	6/74	Army

\$16,029	.38 cal. revolvers; rifles	7/74	Army
100	S&W .357 cal. revolvers	8/74	Imperial
10,000	Gr.Forces S&W .38 cal. revolvers	8/74	Imperial
\$365,622	Gr.Forces .45 cal. revolvers	11/74	Army
\$2,994	M3A1 .45 cal. machine guns	12/74	Army
110	M134 7.62 mm. machine guns	2/75	Army
\$239,119	.38 cal. revolvers	6/75	Army
\$285	Training film, riot control munitions	9/75	Army
\$870,866	.45 cal. pistols	3/76	Army
83	M-113A1 APCs	4/76	Army
\$69,301	.38 cal. revolvers	5/76	Army
\$8,509	.38 cal. revolvers	5/76	Army
100	.38 cal. revolvers	6/76	Imp.Grd.
300,672	40mm. cal. cartridges	-----	
	Imp.Iran.		
50,040	Grenades	-----	Gend. IIG
\$2,052	.50 cal. machine guns; .45 cal. pistols	7/76	Army
\$69,301	.38 cal. revolvers	5/76	Army
\$1,944,372	M2 .50 cal. machine guns	9/77	Army
\$300,731	M2 .50 cal. machine guns	1/78	Army

Source: Compiled by Mike Klare and Dan Volman, Institute for Policy Studies.

United States Military Sales to Iran, 1950-1979 (in thousands of dollars)

Fiscal Year	Government-to-Government (FMS)		Commercial
	Agreements	Deliveries	
1950-66	292,494	47,292	
1960-66			5,905
1967	143,873	38,866	2,022
1968	69,038	56,717	5,147
1969	251,573	94,881	10,084
1970	113,154	127,717	9,811
1971	396,841	79,352	27,059
1972	519,110	214,807	36,975
1973	2,157,355	238,633	19,421
1974	4,373,225	510,347	35,322

1975	3,020,979	956,372	49,410
1976	1,688,381	1,466,767	107,943
1977	5,803,079	2,245,899	121,500
1978 (est)	3,000,000	-----	131,000
1979 (est)	2,625,000	-----	141,000
TOTAL	24,454,102	6,718,270	702,599

Sources: For 1950-1975, U.S. Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea Areas, Report of Staff Survey Mission to Ethiopia, Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula, House Committee on International Relations, Dec. 1977, pp. 135-6; for 1976-79, Department of Defense, Security Assistance Program, Congressional Presentation Document FY 1979. These documents are taken from MERIP Reports 8, 71 (1978):22-23.

APPENDIX B

Most Iranians did not want to be the agents of any country, but to get rid of the foreign domination imposed on them by the Shah. That is why, to perpetuate himself in power, the Shah had only one alternative: to eliminate those who read banned books or criticized the regime. Obviously, reading such books does not mean an automatic reversion to any particular ideology. Rather it widens the scope of our vision; enhances our knowledge and promotes creativity; stimulates minds and creates analytically critical political thought. This, in turn, leads to the progressive construction of human societies. Is reading a banned book more dangerous than granting political immunity to foreigners? Is it more hazardous than stealing from the common good? It is absurd and, more important, a contradiction, to see reading a book as a crime against the establishment, but foreign domination as a sign of the near arrival of "The Great Civilization." The Shah suffered from the syndrome of misperception--he saw Iran as an independent country; the opposition perceived it as a dependent formation and wanted a society free from domination. But the opposition was either tortured to death or forced to silence. Ironically, the Shah, when deposed in 1979, wrote, "I had then realized that the Americans wanted me out" (See M. R. Pahlavi, Answer to History, p. 165.)

What kind of independence was the Shah's "close to Great Civilization" country? What was the role of the army? Who was commander-in-chief? The Shah or General Huyser? If the Americans indeed wanted the Shah out, why didn't the army move to defend the independence of the country? Was it less important than reading a banned book? Why did those who read a book

received up to 10 years imprisonment or torture, but the army and SAVAK, whose commander supposedly had become practically Huysen's prisoner, did not react? One wonders what happened to the nationalism of the army that allowed a foreign power to bring down its leadership (Richard Cottam, "Goodbye to America's Shah," Foreign Policy 34 [Spring 1979]:3-14.)

The mission of Gen. Dutch Huyser, the American deputy commander of NATO to Tehran at the peak of the Iranian Revolution, answers these and other questions. According to William Sullivan, the American ambassador to Iran, Huyser's mission was to prepare and advise the army to support the prime minister-designate, Shapour Bakhtiar. If support for Bakhtiar could not stem the tidal wave of revolution, then Huyser was to suppress the revolution. And, if necessary, Huyser had been ordered by the Defense Department to prepare the armed forces to control the oil fields and even "operate the machinery of oil industry." In the final analysis, he was to see that the armed forces acted in a direction that would guarantee the continued ideological and politicoeconomical domination of the United States in the foreseeable future (W. Sullivan, Mission to Iran, [New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1981], pp. 227-234).

In other words, the United States wanted to prolong the status quo in Iran. Business circles, bankers, corporations, especially the military industrial complex, were firmly behind the Shah. But the Carter administration had realistically comprehended that, without a degree of liberalization and the satisfaction of basic human rights, the preservation of the status quo would be, in the long run, impossible. The elevation of human rights policy under abusive

political structures whose continuity was guaranteed by repression, torture, and murder was indeed a sharp contradiction.

This policy greatly confused the Shah and his adherents. The Shah's conviction was that he was the source of inspiration. Nobody else could know as much as he did. Hence, being the embodiment of Divine Law, it was unacceptable to criticize him for the violation of human rights. Moreover, his followers promoted this mythology by creating a cult of leadership. One would often hear that the Shah was the "Shadow of God." The Shah himself wrote in Mission to My Country that once he was riding his horse and fell. Suddenly a hidden hand grabbed him and put him back on the horse. The Shah and his followers soon forgot that the invisible hand was the CIA's. As the explosive pressures grew, all these myth-making professionals expected the same hidden hand magically to rescue the system. But it was too late for the hidden hand to break down an organized, united, and insurmountable popular will. The Shah and his entourage immediately began to look for scapegoats, ignoring the historical rise and demise of political systems (See Christos P. Ioannides, America's Iran: Injury and Catharsis [Lanham: University Press of America, 1984], chap. 1).

CHAPTER VI

1. WHAT IS MEANT BY RADICAL POLITICAL THOUGHT?

The Radical school of thought avers that the world is not free; that is to say, man is a dominated and alienated being. His very life negates his happiness. He is deprived of dignity and liberty and lives in a constant state of insecurity. This negative state of affairs, which consists of economic exploitation, cultural repression, and political domination, contradicts logic, reason, and a scientific outlook. The dominant class, which maintains its power by force, thought manipulation, distortion of ideas, creation of false consciousness and control, has created a divided society that undermines creativity and reduces man to nothing.¹

Criticism not only negates the established order, but also attacks the conformistic logic and falseness associated with it. The Critical school, by denying the dominant class's competency, attempts a transition to a new form of reality, to a radically different order of thinking, and to a higher stage of development.² It is a revolutionary science that attempts to help the oppressed free themselves from exploitative social relations. It strives to liberate man from alienation and to restore the right to liberty and civilization. It tries to help man achieve the ideal society in which everyone has an equal opportunity for free and creative development. The Critical school, in sum, attempts to instill in the dominated political consciousness. It is revolutionary and negates what is before it and tends to expose what is hidden. Hence, self-realization can be accomplished only through the abolition of the "unfree existence."³

The basic premise of the Critical school of thought is that motion constitutes the basis of all things, that all development is subject to change. And change results from conflict between two contradictory forces. Therefore, an internally active conflict is the creator of all change. The impetus for change lies in contradictions within a given object. Hence, the development of human societies is generated by the struggle of opposites.⁴

In this process of development, external and internal dynamism are mutually reinforcing factors. But external causes culminate in changes in "quantity" and not in "quality." They cannot, for instance, explain why a change takes place in the first place, or why one thing changes into another, or why the things are qualitatively different.

Since internal contradictions form the basis of change and those external cause the "condition," the latter, in fact, are activated by the former.⁵ For instance, in a temperature of 100oC. (212oF.), water reaches the boiling point. As soon as the water boils, it changes into steam. At this stage, the stage of motion, it is no longer water. Thus, quantity is changed into quality.⁶ In this interaction, what is important is the internal dynamism of water, because the same temperature may burn a stone or a piece of wood, but it cannot convert them into steam. This is why the basis of change is considered critical.⁷

Human society is replete with contradictions. Changes arise from contradictions based on dialectical development anchored in antagonistic sociopolitical structures. Historically, the sharpest manifestation of social contradictions is the struggle that has existed and continues to exist between

classes. The conflict between classes is considered to be the motive force of history. Contradictions between man and nature, between classes, between ideas, between the labor delivered and wages received, between the new and old orders are all potentially explosive contradictions that exist within the system. And it is these contradictions that tend to destroy the old system in an epochal struggle, that gives birth to a new one.

Because the objective basis of change always exists, what is needed is the subjective cause, that is, enlightened political awareness. This can be provided by critical thought whose function is the emancipation of the oppressed.⁸ Within this school, the Marxian theory of revolution and Marxists who, like Marx, aim at emancipatory politics, will be used but with a slightly different interpretation.

2. THE MARXIAN THEORY OF REVOLUTION

According to Marxian formulation, the existing realities are a product of historical process. History bears evidence of class struggle, social transformation, and political development. In the Marxian theory of historical analysis, every formation is subject to change. It is the product of its epoch and thus must give rise to the creation of a new formation, a new reality, as the forces of production are developed to their limits of maturation. For Marx, revolutionary change is initiated by contradictions, conflicts, and struggles. Each dominant historical formation, by virtue of its inherent internal contradictions, generates its own destruction. More specifically, these contradictions develop out of class struggle, which, in turn, leads to social change, the elimination of existing ideals

and the negative state of affairs and of diametrically antagonistic social relations that are no longer compatible with the needs and realities of the present. Thus, central to Marx's theory of revolution is class struggle, and conflict is the means of determining and bringing into being a higher formation. The theory dialectically defines the formation of each mode of production, and deals with the contradictions between and within social structures and the forces of production and with class struggles between social classes.⁹

But what is meant by dialectical change? It is a law of change through contradictions that are inherent within the existing mode of thought. It involves a process of development and transition by means of internally inherent contradictions.¹⁰ Although it is believed that Marx adopts the Hegelian system of dialectics and utilizes the Hegelian language of contradictions, the Marxian perception of dialectics and his principle of contradictions stand in sharp contrast to Hegel's formulations. For Marx, Hegelian dialectics involve mystification and, hence, have to be demystified. According to Marx, "With [Hegel], the dialectic is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell."¹¹ This "turning right side up again" means the liberation of dialectics from Hegelian mystical idealism, for political thought in the abstract means nothing. The idealistic version of Hegelian dialectic must be inverted to enable the dialectic to operate empirically. In respect of the logic of dialectics, the two opposing things form a unity of opposites. It is within this unity that they oppose each other, interact, and finally cancel each other out. This formulation contends that there is an irreconcilable tension between what is

existing and what is becoming. Each stage of historical development is progress in the making. It involves the simultaneous recognition of its self-negation and subsequent destruction.¹²

Marx holds that the course of history is determined by class struggle based on dialectical change. According to this formulation, the existing dominant affairs are negative and can be converted into a positive form only by the destruction of that prevailing negativity, that dominant state of affairs. This Marxian idea of dialectical negation argues a simultaneous destruction/preservation of the reality in existence by keeping its progressive and positive aspects rejecting its false and negative features.

The course of historical development is charted by Marx's dialectics, which contain three basic elements: a thesis, an antithesis, and a synthesis. In every stage of development, the thesis produces its contradiction, the antithesis. The theoretical function of the antithesis is to negate the thesis, to cancel out the contradictions rooted in the thesis. From this confrontation emerges the synthesis, which is the embodiment of the truth.

In Marx's scheme, the thesis is the dominant capitalist class, the antithesis is the proletariat, and the synthesis is the classless society that develops from the clashes between these two classes. Marx asserts that the relationship between these two classes is determined by their antagonism.¹³

The proletarian class, says Marx, is the source of wealth. It is the creator of culture, industry, and civilization. Everything, in fact, is a product of the laborer's hands. But the objects, that is, what has been produced, stand in hostile

opposition to the creator. He is alienated from the product he has produced. His labor does not belong to him; it becomes the private property of the capitalist class. The more he produces, the less valued he is. In fact, argues Marx, he is cheaper than the commodity he creates.¹⁴

Moreover, the activity, the work, of the laborer is not determined by his will or by his own creativity. He has no choice. In order to survive, he must work under compulsion. Consequently, when he is not at work, he feels at home; when he is at work, he feels outside of himself. The worker is thus happy when he does not work and unhappy when he works. His freedom lies only in "eating, drinking and sexuality." The process of capital accumulation, then, in the sense that it leads to the exploitation of the laboring class, dehumanizes the worker. He works and creates value, but someone else appropriates the product of his labor.¹⁵

It follows, then, that the proletarian class and that of wealth are opposite concepts; they form a unity of opposites. The existence of the two leads to the creation of private property. What is important, says Marx, is to show what position each concept takes within the unity and conflict of opposites. "Private property as wealth," argues Marx, is compelled to preserve the existence of itself and its opposite, the working class that produces it. This is the positive pole within the unity of opposites. The laborer, on the contrary, is forced to abolish himself and in doing so to eliminate his opposite, the private property and private ownership that make him proletariat. This is the negative side of the opposition.

Whereas the property owner, the bourgeoisie, within the unity of opposition, is a conservative class, the working class is a radical one. While the

former attempts, due to its vested class interests, to preserve existing relations, the latter tries to destroy them. It is clear, therefore, that the process of capital accumulation requires the unity of the capitalist and the proletarian classes. But this unity is contradictory. The two classes cannot both advance their social mobility and make progress together toward the objectives that inhere in their social relations. It lies in the nature of the capitalist class to exploit the working class; indeed, without exploitation, this class cannot advance itself, cannot accumulate its billions. The working class, by its nature, is a party to the conflict; and thus resists this exploitation.¹⁶

When contradiction is resolved by class struggle, capital takes on a different appearance. The synthesis resulting from this political struggle derives something from both of the conflicting forces though more from the progressive features contained in the thesis and the antithesis. Hence, contradiction does not totally abolish what is contradicted, but rather it tends to adapt it to fit new ideas and objectives. The point to be emphasized here is that transition to the higher stages of development takes place through contradictions. These contradictions are resolved by political class action based on dialectical change. The resolution of the problem, therefore, lies in what is termed "the negation of the negation." The development of capital itself was effected by similar contradictions rooted in the previous mode of production.

Marx attempts to explain the formation of human society and the changes that have taken place in the course of historical development. Man applies his labor, says Marx, to nature. He appropriates the products of nature and adapts

them to his needs. Man's basic needs include food, clothes, and shelter. To be able to live, he has to find the means to satisfy these ends. It is then the production of these means that lays the foundation for man's first historical action.¹⁷ As man's basic needs are satisfied, he develops new needs, which he is able to satisfy by his labor and his increasingly productive activity. He studies the process of material production, which involves men in some form of relation with each other and the means of production. (This is said to include labor power, instruments of production, tools, technology, skill, raw materials, machines, and so on.) In order for these products to be produced, the forces of production must enter into definite relations. The actual relations are social relations of production. It is through such relations that production and material distribution occur. In other words, it is the relations of production (social relations, distribution of products, material goods, access to means of production) that governs the labor process. The totality of means and relations of production along with the conditions of production (climate, geography, and the like.) is called the mode of production, the economic base, or the economic foundation of society.¹⁸ The following remarks from Marx's preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy illustrate this point:

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure."¹⁹

It follows that production and economic relations form the economic structure of society, its real base, and on this rests the superstructure. The

superstructure includes political, judicial, ethical, philosophical, and religious beliefs and also institutions like the state, political parties, and sociopolitical organizations like the church. Sociopolitical organizations consolidate traditional beliefs and create conformity with ruling class ideas. These ideas are determined and conditioned by the economic foundation of society.

Given the fact that contradiction is the moving principle of historical development and that progress follows antagonism, this situation cannot remain static. It must transform itself to a higher level of development.²⁰ How does this happen? Marx argues that

at a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or--what is but a legal expression for the same thing--with the property relations within which they had been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution.²¹

According to Marx, when the relations of production cease to correspond to the means of production, the conflict between the two is intensified and society reaches the level of breakdown. In other words, incompatibility between the forces and relations of production sharpens the contradictions that destroy the institution of capitalism. The conviction, however, is that when the relations of production cease to be development forms of the productive forces, they turn into the shackles of those same forces. The existing conflict between the forces and relations of production is thus resolved by social revolution.²²

Implicit in this theoretical formulation is that class antagonisms specific to each particular mode of production lead dialectically to the emergence of new

forces whose needs cannot be met within the old order because it restricts the further development of productive forces. They are thus fettered; because, the means of production owned by the capitalist class cannot be fully utilized as full utilization would require new relations that are not compatible with the profit maximization ethic of the capitalist class. This deadlock can be broken only in class struggle. In the Marxian view, "The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle."²³

For Marx, the classes are the source of social conflict. It is through this conflict of opposites that society develops to higher stages. To support his contention, Marx provides us with historical evidence. He perceived four successive major modes of production in the history of mankind: the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois. Each of these came into being through contradictions and antagonisms that had developed in the womb of the preceding mode of production. In ancient epochs, for example, slaves and serfs under the master-slave and lord-serf modes of production were incited into rebellion by the logic of their deteriorating material conditions and antagonistic class relations. Thus, just as the previous modes of production, by virtue of their dynamism of internal contradictions based on dialectical class struggle, gave way to the development of capitalism, this process, too, will ensure the ultimate victory of the proletariat, leading to a classless society.²⁴

For Marx, the most destructive contradiction of capitalism is that the wealth produced by the laboring class is appropriated privately by a class that is not a producer. By virtue of its usurpation of the means of production, it owns

everything, even the objects of others' labor. Its interests are therefore antagonistic to those of the greater whole. Capitalism, as a thesis, thus creates its own antithesis, which is the propertyless proletarian class. This contradiction can only be resolved if the "expropriators are expropriated." This means that the antithesis, the nonproperty-owning working class, which is subjugated to the exploitative relations created by the thesis, the nonproducing capitalistic class, is bound by historical necessity to abolish these relations by political action via social revolution. Hence, it is the proletarian class that will initiate a solution to the problem, which is the social control of production. It is only then that class antagonism is eradicated, alienation overcome, and the synthesis, a new social formation that is socialism, emerges.²⁵

3. MARXISM AND THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

The strength and weakness of Marxian Theory became clearer when applied to the Iranian Revolution. To start with, Marx argues that there are two principal classes in advanced capitalist societies: a capitalist and a proletarian class. The former is defined as the owners of the means of production, and the latter as the class whose members possess no means of production of their own. To live, this class has to sell its labor power. The concept of "class" from Marx's point of view, then, is determined by the groups relations to the prevailing mode of production. And it is this primacy of economic relations that determines class struggle.

Iran, certainly, was a society of definable clashing social classes. The Iranian Revolution, it can be claimed, involved a class-based struggle from below, that is, the struggle of the oppressed classes against an oppressor class. Yet, if we adopt a Marxian definition of class and define the concept in terms of its relation to the means of production, serious theoretical problems are immediately evident, simply because Marx assigns the leading role to the proletariat in class struggle and confines the revolution to the antagonistic capitalist/proletarian class relations.

This analysis, as far as the Iranian Revolution is concerned, does not hold for Iran because it was not a fully developed capitalistic society. And the antagonism of class relations in Iran cannot be determined primarily on the basis of exclusive contention and rigidity between these two classes. Although the Iranian proletariat has been a class-conscious political force, and it has been a living contradiction to the established order, it was not the antagonism of the laboring class alone that led to the revolution. The Iranian Revolution was effected by a multiclass coalition. It was the contradiction between the state and the oppressed classes that triggered the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979.²⁶

Contrary to Marxian formulation, the classes that have been the active agents in most social revolutions from below have been the middle-class intelligentsia and the peasants. For instance, these classes were the most instrumental in the French, Russian, Chinese, Cuban, Algerian, and Vietnamese revolutions. But for Marx, peasants are a barbarian class. They are no more than "potatoes in a sack."²⁷ Furthermore, he assumed the middle-class intelligentsia (lawyers, professors, writers, priests) "as the ideological representatives and

spokesmen of the bourgeoisie."²⁸ This view does not conform to the role played by the peasants and middle-class intelligentsia in the Iranian Revolution.

Although the Iranian Revolution was not a rural based upheaval, the discontented middle-class peasantry, khwushnishins [landless peasants], especially the migrant peasantry, the poor peasants, and the village laboring class, played a critical role in the Revolution. These forces, contrary to Marxian analysis, were not "potatoes," but part of a hidden dynamite ready to reinforce the explosion. The middle-class peasantry, who owned 7-10 hectares of land, became receptive to political radicalism because it lacked the capital to increase its crop yields.²⁹ This class simply could not afford the costs of mechanization and fertilization which were absolutely necessary to improve agrarian output and sustain a living. The government was expected to help them with improved seeds, cheap credit, and other costs involved in mechanizing, similar to the support given to big farmers. Because the aid was not forthcoming, they felt discriminated against and subsequently were organized into antagonistic political activism against the prerevolutionary government.³⁰

The antagonism of the middle-class peasantry was reinforced and strengthened by the active participation of khwushnishins. Some of the landless peasants were agricultural wage laborers and others were small village traders. The latter group had evolved an on-going business relationship with urban retailers, who strongly influenced them in their anti-government views. The petite village traders, in fact, were politicized by the bazaris who had been made scapegoats for stifling inflation by the government.³¹ The landless, as well as the middle class

landed peasantry, had become very cynical about the government. They could easily sense and observe that following the governmental land reform, the lot of non-cultivator landlords had been dramatically improved, while the living conditions of the peasantry, especially cultivators, had deteriorated. That is why they believed that the state existed to increase the prosperity of the rich. However, peasants, particularly from those villages located in proximity to cities, participated in anti-Shah demonstrations and confrontations with security forces. Those bare-footed wage laborers who worked in the cities near their villages but did not reside in the cities served as a link between urban political ideas and local peasant communities. The flow of ideas increased the general political awareness of peasants, mobilizing them into political participation.³²

As mentioned earlier, the migrant peasantry, including small landholders, the poor peasants, and the agricultural or village laboring class, played a critical role in revolution. The influx of some two million peasants into the cities between 1966 and 1976 expanded the role of the oppositional forces. Some of these migrants became factory workers. Factory life and urban residency in general exposed them to political ideas and enhanced their potential for collective political action.

The most politically active group included those rural youths who lived in urban areas or those urban youths who had village origins. This proletarianized group was easily mobilized into revolutionary political action.³³ The peasants' direct and indirect involvement in the Iranian Revolution, therefore, negates Marx's vision of them as nothing but "potatoes in a sack."

Also in contrast to the predictions of Marxian theory, the middle class intelligentsia played an important role in the Iranian Revolution. This class, in fact, has been the most revolutionary force within the Iranian formation. But it is generally believed that the middle-class intelligentsia cannot, make a revolution, without enlisting the support of the peasantry. In developing capitalist countries like Iran, it is impossible for the government to meet the demands of militant students. Even if it could, the coalition of government and intelligentsia would be temporary. This explains why, the Shah was in an urgent need of a class alliance, in the 1960s.

Historically speaking, the middle-class intelligentsia has been a major participant in both nationalitarian and leftist movements.³⁴ For instance, in the 1930s, for the first time in Iran, when mass illiteracy was the rule, a group of enlightened, Western-educated leftists was formed under the leadership of Dr. Tagi Arani. The Fifty Three, as the group was called, was recruited from the middle-class intelligentsia. "More than 65 percent of the circle belonged to the middle-class, 15 percent to the upper middle-class, and 20 percent to the lower bourgeoisie. Professionally, the group contained 35 percent teachers, 15 percent students, 25 percent lawyers and government employees, including judges, 15 percent workers, and 10 percent others." Although Dr. Arani was murdered in prison in 1940, The rest of the fifty-three were released from prison following the Allied invasion of Iran. This extremely well-educated revolutionary intelligentsia founded the Tudeh party in 1941. This party, whose main strength was derived from engineers, professors, students, writers, and so on, played a critical role in

awakening the masses as well as in organizing political strikes against the established order. It has never stopped challenging the political system.³⁵

The middle-class intelligentsia has been an important sociopolitical force. It was this class that rallied to support Mosaddegh's National Front. Although the National Front recruited members from all social classes, the middle-class intelligentsia constituted its nerve center. This class has been the motive force of all nationalistic movements. The main objectives of all middle class-led movements in Iran have included a call for national independence and liberation from domination. The National Front, whose policies were "negative equilibrium," the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian oil industry, and the establishment of a nationalistic middle-class democracy, defeated the arbitrary politics of monarchical domination though it was a short-lived victory.

Even though the party was crushed, middle-class opposition continued, but underground Iranian universities were the battleground. The army repeatedly invaded the campuses, gunning down politically conscious forces, which posed a serious threat to the system.³⁶

Following the expanding rural-urban income gap and the disastrous failure of the shah's land reform program, migration to urban areas became a political phenomenon. Radically conscious political activists in the urban areas could easily ally themselves with the poor migrants who had been the victims of the shah's reform policies. These migrant forces expanded middle-class opposition to the system. This brain/number alliance reversed or, at least, weakened the gun/number alliance that was urgently needed by the regime.³⁷

In the 1970s, this new class alliance, in fact, was gaining momentum. In 1977, radical political activism transformed itself into open conflict against the system. Lawyers, teachers, poets, professors, students, writers, and intellectuals openly and boldly challenged the regime and participated in a protest campaign. Widespread student demonstrations on campuses, poetry readings, open letterwriting, and criticism formed the protest agenda for the middle-class intelligentsia's opposition to the restriction of political freedom.³⁸

However, in agreement with Marx, one may say that the upper class-oriented intellectuals and those who were politically and materially ambitious sold out and became the ideological theorizers of the regime. These apolitical sycophants were incorporated into the ruling class and remained loyal admirers of the Pahlavi regime. These forces came to be counterrevolutionaries and attempted to defeat the Revolution at all costs. Such individuals are still active in exile, hoping to restore their lost positions

A further defect of the Marxian formulation lies in Marx's insistence on the economic concept which he claimed constituted the base of society on which the superstructure of the social formation is erected. In this context, religious institutions make important ideological contributions to the preservation of both structures (base and superstructure). In a sense, Marx says, religion provides support for the endurance of the existing exploitative socioeconomic relations and the perpetuation of vested interests.

Marx's concentration on the economic dimension of society poses a serious problem in his theoretical formulation: it omits the cultural and belief

systems of the oppressed masses. The Iranian experience, for instance, demonstrated that radical shi'ism does not necessarily rationalize oppression by the ruled, nor does it support domination by means of injustice. Shi'i Islam, in Iran, proved that it was not necessarily a force for alienation nor an opiate for the masses, as Marx and many Marxist theoreticians believed. In Iran, the religious mass mobilization and the revival and upsurge of Shi'i Islamic political thought contradicted the thesis that religion narcotized the oppressed classes. Instead it transformed the lower classes into a highly radicalized political force against imperial domination and the culture of oppression perpetrated by the superstructure.³⁹

If we accept the Marxian argument that revolutionary change alters socioeconomic and political structures and, with them, the spiritual life of a society, then, with the destruction of the Pahlavi dynasty, Islamic ideas, too, might have been demolished. In Iran the opposite happened. The monarchy was toppled and Shi'ism prevailed.

Historically speaking, Shi'ism constitutes a philosophy of emancipation. It provides for social justice. Its principle tenet is that social order without a just social relationship cannot be maintained. It also provides not only for human salvation, but also for a just society to be realized in this world, even though this is a temporal world and not perfect. More important, there has been theoretically speaking, antagonism between the secular temporal order and Shi'i thought. Indeed, opposition to tyranny has been one of the most outstanding features of Shi'i Islam.⁴⁰

According to Shi'i Islam, only Imam is free from sin and error, he is the only one who is infallible, hence, legitimate rule belongs to him. But, with the occultation of the twelfth Imam in 874, the legitimate order disappeared from the face of the earth. Hence, in the absence of the Hidden Imam, all temporal powers tend to be usurpative. Who should rule then? Based on Shi'i political thought, religion and state are not separated. They are one. Prophet Mohammad was both a politician and a spiritual leader. After him, Imam Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, undertook the administration of Islamic social justice. The decedents of Ali are infallible Imams who have since administered Islamic affairs in God's name. But because the twelfth Imam went into hiding, mujtahids are more qualified than secular rulers to interpret and administer the affairs of the Islamic community in his absence.⁴¹

Two conclusions can be inferred from this analysis: (1) Shiism has never relinquished its claim to leadership; and (2) there exists an obvious tension and contradiction between the state and the progressive elements of the Shi'i school of thought. These factors show that Shiism has not been an integral part of the culture of oppression and this, indeed, proves false the Marxian idea that religion supports the prevailing structure of oppression. (This Marxian critique is indeed true in other contexts, but it is contradicted by the Iranian version of Shiism.) Moreover, if we accept the thesis that progress is generated by antagonism and conflicting ideas, then Shi'i thought is not regressive, but progressive. The followers and believers of Shi'ism do not accept the present as truth, or reality. The truth is not; it is becoming. Although one may argue that such a vision tends to be

utopian, it is at least rejectionist. It is the negation of the state, which is a living contradiction as far as the theory of dialectical change is concerned. Nonetheless, based on Shi'ism's forward-looking view, the ultimate truth can be realized only by the return of the Hidden Imam. This return, in turn, will make possible the realization of social justice. The downtrodden will be elevated and redemption realized.⁴²

An examination of the radical mass mobilization declaration by Ayatollah Khomeini, which was issued from Neauphle-le-chateau, further attests to the revolutionary character of Shi'ism:

Moharram, the month of courage and sacrifice, has arrived. This is the month during which the blood of martyrs defeated the sword and Truth overcame falsehood, rendering the satanic rule of tyrants futile. Moharram has taught generations of people throughout history how to defeat oppression and it has been remembered as the month in which Truth prevailed over secular super-powers. In this month, our Imam Hossein. . . showed us how the clenched fists of freedom fighters can crush the tanks and guns of the oppressors, ultimately giving the victory to Truth....Islam is for the oppressed and the peasants and the poor. It is the Shah who, in the interest of the U.S. government, has ruined our agriculture and is giving away our natural resources to the capitalists. . . today nobody has any excuse to be passive. . . I consider martyrdom for Truth an everlasting honour.⁴³

The message clearly contains strong revolutionary language. In Iran, after centuries of struggle, Shiism finally prevailed. It overthrew a monarchical regime that had 2,500 years of recognized continuity. Hence, Shiism, contrary to Marxian conviction, proved to be on the side of the oppressed rather than being an integral part of the culture of oppression and domination. Indeed, it teaches its believers to resist oppression, to fight for social justice, equality, and the abolition

of poverty. Imam Ali and Imam Houssein, the two distinguished leaders of Islam, lived in great poverty and spent their lives defending the cause of the oppressed. Imam Hossein, in pursuit of social justice and truth, was martyred by the established order.⁴⁴

The evidence against Marxian theory's belief in religion's tranquilizing effect in the case of revolutionary Shi'ism is compelling. The Shi'i culture of revolutionary emancipation is even claimed to be to some extent in accord with Marxist analysis. The political debate that prevailed in prerevolutionary Iran was that capital accumulation had created dependent capitalism. The country was, sociopolitically, culturally, and economically, dominated by imperialism. Thus, the exploitative relationship between the dominant and dominated formation was instituted. This dependent relationship posed a serious threat to Iranian society. Nonetheless, the Pahlavi regime lacked a social base; it was supported only by the comprador bourgeoisie, army, and imperial forces. Violent political action was the only way to force liberation from the machinery of state-sponsored terror. The resulting synthesis aimed at redistribution of wealth, the pursuit of independent socioeconomic development, and the elimination of imperial domination. It was in the light of this kind of radical interpretation that the system branded revolutionary religious forces as "Islamic Marxists." Marx's definition of religion is incompatible with Shi'ism, for the latter has a history of bloody struggle against domination, oppression, and economic exploitation.⁴⁵

So far as the forces and relations of production are concerned, Marx argues that the dynamic of historical transformation lies in the conflict between

these forces. The applicability of this formulation to the Iranian Revolution, too, seems, methodologically speaking, problematic. Assuming that the Iranian Revolution occurred because the relations of production were in conflict with the means of production, then Iran might have been a fully developed capitalistic society. But, it was not an advanced capitalistic state in the sense of Western Europe, the United States, or Japan. Even if it had been, there was still a fundamental theoretical problem because the Marxian theory of revolution was formulated to explain revolutions in economically-advanced capitalistic formations (which did not happen.) Then the key question which enters the debate is, why, for example, did revolution occur in Iran but not in the highly advanced capitalistic countries, where contradiction between forces and relations of production, as Marx predicted, prevailed? Social revolutions, though involved in class struggle, have not taken place in highly developed capitalist countries, but have occurred in agrarian societies. This does not conform with Marx's theory.⁴⁶

Paradoxically, Marx's theory of revolution, based on class struggle, is better able to explain the eruption of revolution from below. In favor of Marx's theory, in Iran polarization developed along class lines. Whereas the ruling class tended to defend and perpetuate its role, other social forces sought to destroy that role as they saw it unsuited to their further socioeconomic or political development. This can be empirically supported.

A claim can be made that since the integration of Iran into capitalistic centers, Iranian history has been the history of domination and struggle. Indeed, these struggles have called into question the legitimacy of a ruling class tied to

Western elite oligarchies. They have unmasked the corruption of a court that hid behind political legitimacy: the Shah is the Shadow of God. It can be safely argued that Western penetration into Iran in the second half of the nineteenth century resulted in the development of a dependent local economy, a decline in locally and traditionally manufactured goods. This development threatened bazaris. The externally induced threat thus compelled the fragmented domestic producers to emerge as an interest-conscious traditional middle-class (usually defined as bazaris, traders, petty shopkeepers, merchants, retailers, manufacturers of traditional goods, or businessmen).⁴⁷

The Industrial Revolution enhanced the military might of the European countries and with it their supremacy in power politics. To feed the hungry machinery of capitalism, capitalist societies were badly in need of the raw materials that existed in abundance in the Third World countries. The urgent need for cheap resources culminated in a Western policy of military expansionism, colonialization, and interventionism. Although Iran, thanks to the British/Russian rivalry, was not colonized directly, its political and economic destiny was determined overseas.⁴⁸ The European colonial powers imposed military defeat and extremely humiliating political treaties.⁴⁹

The military defeats suffered by Iran were not only degrading, but they created financial problems as well, which forced Iran to borrow money from the capitalist formations. And every new loan required new concessions from Iran which, in turn, led to further political and economic domination by imperialist forces. The privileges or concessions awarded to imperial powers affected local

producers. The producers had to shoulder the burden of both concessionaries and non-producers.

Thus, at the turn of the century the opposition of the various classes to the traditional ruling class and, through it, to the exploiting foreign concessionaires was on the rise. The peasants suffered severely from a heavy taxation burden part of which was given to the concessionaires. The peasants were exploited and robbed by the landed class, as well.

The merchant class, which wanted to control both local and foreign trade, was also sharply antagonistic toward foreign traders. This hostility was further aggravated by the government's refusal or inability, mostly due to external pressure, to devise a policy of protectionism for locally produced goods. This class thus suffered from foreign domination and loss of economic opportunity imposed on them by the foreigners through the court.

These factors, combined with increasing domination by the West, antagonized the ulamas' opposition to the political system. As foreigners sought further concessions from the Iranian court, the alliance of social classes attempted to abolish such concessions. The coalition had to resort to a political course that would check monarchical power, believing that the unrestrained power of the monarchy was responsible for foreign domination. The solution was thought to lie in a constitutional monarchy, which was created by a political movement.⁵⁰

This constitutional movement was expected to bring about a democratic parliamentary system in which the people would prevail. Unfortunately, it did not.

Instead, it led to a landlord-dominated institution which refused to allow the participation of non-aristocratic classes in politics.⁵¹

The state was then dominated by the landed and influential classes. This state of affairs subordinated the middle and lower classes to the political and economic will of the ruling oligarchic class. As the state became the instrument of the ruling class, it was utilized to maximize the political and economic interests of this class at the cost of other socioeconomic classes. The constitutional movement thus failed to materialize:

We all know that the constitutional revolutionaries directed their struggle at the princes, the court, and the aristocrats. They fought to destroy the influence of those oligarchs who worked as spies for the enemy. They had no desire to establish such a senate as we have now. We must therefore disband it.⁵²

Seen in this light, it can then be claimed that Iran's history bears evidence of class struggle based on material interests, though class conflict was not confined exclusively to two classes, the capitalist and proletarian or the lords and serfs. But the domination of the poor by the rich cannot be disputed. In this context a reformist deputy, as cited by Abrahamian had this to say. "The ruling class can alleviate this class conflict by sharing its power with others."⁵³ Moreover, "if nothing is done to bridge the wide gulf between the rich and the poor, the flame of class war will consume us all."⁵⁴

Following the constitutional movement, the middle-class intelligentsia favored nationalism, socialism and republicanism. They were convinced that the adoption of any of these ideals would bring dignity to Iran and reduce British

influence. This, in turn, would defeat the oligarchism that provided the soil for British imperial domination.

Although the petite bourgeoisie (bazaris) has proved historically to be participant in sociopolitical movements, in nationalistic uprisings, and has shared the patriotism of the intelligentsia, it greatly feared the outcome of radicalism associated with the aforementioned political ideas, for those ideas would break down the autonomy of the bazar as a traditional center of marketing, trading, banking, and religious association. In addition, it might lead to the weakening of traditional values. More importantly, modern views might well culminate in the creation of new banking systems, monopolistic corporations, and centralization of capital in a few dominant capitalist hands, which would inevitably lead to the proletarianization of the bazar's petite bourgeoisie class.⁵⁵

This line of argument is in accord with Marxian formulation. According to Marx, "the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence. . . . If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat. They thus defend not their present, but their future interests."⁵⁶

It was for this reason that the petite bourgeoisie in Iran sought political action against the ruling class. With the development of dependent capitalism, the big industrial, commercial, and financial bourgeoisie had also emerged. This necessitated the expansion of assembly industries, the increasing investment of foreign monopoly owners in consumer goods, the growth and expansion of a

modern banking system, and so on. The newly rising bourgeois oil entrepreneur, by virtue of his comprador character, was closely tied to the imperial centers. He, in fact, provided a base for the domination of the domestic market by externally manufactured goods. This class, since it enjoyed the availability of a cheap credit system and generous internal and external political support, effectively competed with the petite bourgeois bazar class. It established big Western-style malls, controlled the distribution of goods produced by the dependent industries, and exercised an almost exclusive control over foreign trade. Needless to say, such a challenge was not only contradicted the interests of the petite bourgeoisie, but also was detrimental to its very existence as a social class. This explains why this class, since the transformation of Iran into a capitalistic economy, remained a critical political opposition force for over a century (from 1872 through 1979). Indeed, with absolute domination by big dependent capital, this class possibly might not have any future. In other words, had the Revolution not taken place in Iran, this class might have been extinguished.

This obvious threat by big capital was aggravated by government's direct assault on small capitalists. They were harassed by the shock troops who were armed with anti-inflation and antiprofitteering weapons. They were fined, arrested, exiled, and terrorized. Since this class, by itself, was unable to withstand the assault inflicted on them by the ruling class, it had no option but to ally with the ulama, who provided them with political leadership and a cultural and ideological base. If the ulama controlled the "sword" (political resources, such as the masses) the bazar possessed the "purse," that is, money.

But for the revolutionary coalition to be effected, something besides state/bazar antagonism was needed: the violation of sanctified Islamic principles. Both conditions existed prior to the 1978-1979 Revolution in Iran. Following the bloody crackdown of 1963 upheaval and forced exile of Ayatollah Khomeini, repression continued on an unprecedented scale. It became, especially in the 1970s, intolerable. In 1970 SAVAK arrested and tortured to death a well-known mujtahid, Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Sa'idi. His death schocked the shi'i scholars and the religious community as a whole and awakened the hatred of the ulama against the state. The system, as Professor Bill correctly argues, had resorted to a direct "frontal attack" against the leading ulama in opposition. Ayatollahs Talegani, Montazeri, Bihшти, Zanjani, Qumi, Hojjat al-Islams Kani, Lahuti, Rafsanjani, Kermani, and Khamenei were all arrested and Ayatollah Shamsabadi was murdered presumably because he did not favor the imperial calendar.⁵⁷

There existed irreconcilable antagonism between the state and the oppressed. The former saw the latter as an obstacle to the continuation of the status quo. The opposition perceived the oppressive state of affairs as being in contradiction to the cultural tradition of Islam and against the interests of the Islamic community. More importantly, this progressive wing of Shi'i Islam considered the state to be a tool of imperial domination and part of the machinery of plundering. It fought to emancipate the oppressed and eradicate exploitative relations and domination in hopes of creating a just social system.

Class struggle in Iran based on a cross-class alliance historically has been fought against imperial domination and its local agents, for example, the

ruling clique and the forces of reaction. But the strategic political importance of the working-class movement did not begin until the 1920s. The migrant Iranians who worked in the Baku oilfields had already been exposed to the political ideas of revolutionary movements, and played an important political role in the early twentieth-century revolutionary upheavals. Some of them participated actively in the constitutional revolution of 1905-1906 and in the Gilan and Azerbaijan movements as well. In the case of the Gilan revolt, as Sepehr Zabih argues, "of the 5,000 regular soldiers which at the height of the movement constituted its military force, more than 600 were Persian Bolsheviks from Baku who belonged to the revolutionary party of Adalat."⁵⁸

In the early 1920s the nine existing trade unions were organized under the leadership of socialist and communist elements. In 1921 the first organized labor movement appeared in Iran. In the same year, these unions joined together to create the Central Council of Federated Trade Unions (CCFIU). This leftist union unified the industrial class, the traditional working class, teachers, and governmental employees. It also organized twenty-one new unions all over the country. It organized strikes against censorship, political oppression and demanded wage increases. The rapid growth of the union and its political significance frightened the vested interests. Hence, Reza Shah forcefully abolished it and all other trade unions. He "outlawed the communist and socialist parties, imposed heavy sentences on anyone advocating socialism, and arrested over 200 labor organizers. Five of these organizers, including the leader of the printers union 'died' in prison."⁵⁹ But the struggle did not cease.

Following the Allied invasion of Iran in 1941, political restrictions were lifted, and political prisoners, including labor organizers and the Fifty Three, were released. After their release, these radical Marxists founded the Tudeh party (Mass arty) and began on the revitalization of the labor union movements. In that year (1941), the party united all the locally organized leftist unions and established the Central United Council of Trade Unions (CCUTU). By 1946, its membership amounted to 400,000 (including 90,000 oil workers). It also had 186 affiliated unions. In 1946, the movement was reaching its peak. Tudeh-inspired workers initiated political strikes. In the north, for instance, they took over some parts of the textile industries. General labor strikes also took place in the oilfields and in the capital, Tehran:

In the refinery at Abadan and in a half-dozen distinct production centers, there were major strikes in the 1945-1946 period, including a three-day general strike in July 1946 over pay and working conditions. This action, in which the workers won most of their demands, was of immense significance and demonstrated how a small but strategically placed working class can play a major role in an economy like Iran's.⁶⁰

Because it controlled the labor movement, the Tudeh party posed a serious threat to the existing order. The owners of the factories were afraid that their factories might fall to the leftists due to the rapid spread of communistic ideas in the workplaces. Fearing the threat posed by the militancy of the Iranian working class, the government moved to crush the labor organizations. Then it set up its own puppet unions and imprisoned all organizers, bringing an end to the life of an independent union forever in Iran.

The CCFTU, of course, resisted this governmental aggression. It conducted politically motivated strikes and challenged the regime's oppressive intention. But it was later brutally repressed. The Left was blamed for the attempted assassination of the shah in 1949, and the systematic repression was intensified. The regime banned both the Tudeh party and the CCFTU. Despite its outlawed status, underground activities remained very much alive. The organization continued to influence laborers at the grass-roots level.⁶¹

Even though Iran was not a highly developed capitalistic formation in the Marxian sense and even though the labor movement had historically been drowned in blood, class struggle does not seem to have come to a standstill. With the inauguration of the relatively open politics of the Mosaddegh era (1951-1953), the underground leftist networks also surfaced and resumed their struggle against the monarchy and the owners of the means of production.⁶² The working class was conscious of its interests. It utilized its most effective weapon, strikes, against the ruling class. It was on the basis of this political awareness that the strike by oil workers in March-April 1951 led to a political demand: the confiscation of the Anglo-Iranian oil company. A major confrontation took place between the government and the strikers and the labor organizers were arrested "on the ground that mass action against the company would provoke a British military intervention and thereby undermine the oil nationalization campaign." Despite the arrests, the working class wholeheartedly supported Mosaddegh's oil nationalization program. Thus, the workers who initiated over 200 strikes between 1951 and 1953, played a major role in eventually forcing the shah out of the country.⁶³

The dominant system constantly wanted to prevent the formation of a politically conscious working class in Iran. To counter the labor movement, it hired thugs and "vagabonds," bribed the labor aristocracy, terrorized labor organizers, devised attacks on organized laborers, and utilized systematic repression. SAVAK kept a constant surveillance on the workers. In key factories or work places, SAVAK agents or retired army personnel were installed as the leaders of trade unions. More importantly, the owners of the means of production, with the assistance of the state machinery, prevented the workers from getting their fair share of the fruits of their labors. In their view, the working class was the manifestation of evilness and hence deserved to be dealt with repressively. The worker was always looked upon as an agent of destruction. Needless to say that "persecution, imprisonment, exile, or perhaps merely dismissal, blacklisting....is the characteristic treatment of any worker seeking to assert his dignity in Iran today."⁶⁴ If we add to this the exploitative class relations and the deplorable working conditions, refusal to give the workers their due rights, and the domination of this class, the antagonistic class relations and class conflict become very obvious, which is consistent with the Marxian formulation.

This argument can be further substantiated if we briefly examine the critical role the working class, especially the oilfield workers, played in the Iranian Revolution. The surprising uprising of labor against the dependent state of the shah nullified the commonly held perception of anti-Marxism that the laboring class is primarily concerned with wage increase and it is bound with false consciousness. The Iranian experience contradicted this view. The continuing strikes in the

oilfields paralyzed the shah's economic system, destroying his internationally created facade of invincibility. They also showed the Western oligarchies that the "island of stability" was not stable anymore and that stability created by force might mean nothing but a deceptive mode.⁶⁵

The workers went on strike throughout the country, but the political action of those in the oil fields proved to be critical. According to Fereidun Fesharaki the oil workers played an important role in the 1978-79 Revolution.. They shut down the oil industry on behalf of the Iranian people and presented political and economic demands. They formed strike committees, forced out puppet managers, and took over production and distribution of oil.⁶⁶ Harry Magdoff and Paul Sweezy, the leading scholars, were impressed by the political action of this class:

There have been few spectacles in recent history so inspiring and heart warming as that of 70,000 oil workers, far and away the best paid and most privileged segment of the working class, bringing to a complete halt the huge production and refining complex which is the Iranian oil industry, and doing it not for better pay or special privileges, but in support of the quintessentially political demand of the whole Iranian people that the Shah and all he stands for must go.⁶⁷

The political demands the workers formulated strengthened and consolidated the Iranian people's anti-shah movement. The followings were placed on the table of Hoshang Ansary, head of NIOC: (1) End martial law; (2) full solidarity and cooperation with the striking teachers; (3) unconditional release of all political prisoners; (4) all foreign employees to leave the country; (5) support for the demands of the production workers, including the dissolution of SAVAK."⁶⁸

Ansary's response to the striking workers was that he would "consider the economic demands but that the others were outside his sphere." Strikers told him that they were not going to make any distinction between . . . economic and noneconomic demands."⁶⁹ This was surprising because in labor unions dominated and firmly controlled by SAVAK agents, it was expected that laborers would develop a false consciousness. This expectation proved ungrounded. It is true that the Iranian regime effectively manipulated the awareness of the laborers by political means, control, pay raises, and so on. It tried to create a labor aristocracy and to buy the workers' loyalty by having them internalize the culture and ideals of the ruling class. But it did not work, and this reflects the revolutionary potential of the working class.

The evidence presented here is compatible with Marxian theoretical formulation. The political action taken by the working class confirmed Marx's premise that class antagonism between the ruling class and the laborers is irreconcilable. Despite the shah's regime doing all it could to buy the workers' loyalty, it failed to pacify them in the long run. In the final analysis, the workers rose up and confronted the regime. They were harassed, forced by the military government to resume their work; their only answer was to stop the production and cripple the shah's security forces, especially the army.

According to Ervand Abrahamian, the laboring class played a decisive role in the Iranian Revolution. In his view, the Revolution was first started in the summer of 1977 by the middle-class intelligentsia who opposed against the unconstitutionality of the regime. The movement soon expanded as the religious

strata and bazaris joined in it calling the shah's system un-Islamic. But this dual contest stagnated in the summer of 1978. The opposing classes had reached a no-win position. The involvement of the working class changed this situation and broke the deadlock.⁷⁰

The first leftist-based strikes took place in Tabriz machine tool and farm tractor factories. Workers demanded, among other things, the dissolution of government-controlled labor unions, the formation of working-class councils, and labor-based trade unions that would defend the rights of the laboring class. The strike extended to include the textile mills of Mazandaran, the northern province of Iran, the car assembly factories of Tehran, and power stations in big provincial cities. The strikes gained momentum when the striking oil workers actively participated in political action calling for a radical transformation of the dominant regime. A strike organizer said that the laborers were determined not to "export oil until they had exported the Shah."⁷¹ It was thus the active involvement of this strategically based class, that enabled the modern middle class, the religious forces, and the protest movement as a whole to force the shah out of the country. The political action taken by the striking oilfield workers was so critical in determining the destiny of the revolution that Ayatollah Khomeini himself on December 3, 1978, announced that "the strike in the oil industry in particular, which prevents looting of the nation's wealth, is an act of obedience to God."⁷²

If this analysis is accepted, then Marxian emphasis on the strategic importance of the working class to revolution holds. If one adds Marx's general formulation, the power of his theory to explain Iran becomes much more plausible.

It maintains that "proletarian or at least anti-capitalist revolutions are more likely" to take place in those countries where feudalistic relations have disintegrated and capitalistic ones tend to develop or are developing.⁷³

A feudalistic mode of production, in the sense of feudal Europe, did not exist in Iran, but the country was dominated, at least until 1963, by a landed class. In whatever context it begins, whether feudalistic or semifeudalistic, the transition from precapitalism to capitalism always involves tension and conflict. Undoubtedly, beginning in 1963, a capitalistic accumulation was taking place in Iran. Whereas precapitalist formations tend to preserve the old modes of production--as indeed was the case with the Iranian conservative forces, which attempted to maintain the old traditional relations and all they stood for--"primitive capital accumulation" tries not only to destroy them but also to create new forces. This, in turn, leads to resistance by those who are victimized by it. The process of capital accumulation creates, as Marx noted, the forces of antithesis destroying the precapitalist forces, "independent artisans," "peasants," and "feudal property owners."⁷⁴

Again, a similar situation developed in Iran. The shah's reform programs, initiated under state capitalism, proletarianized the peasantry and led to class restratification. They created new classes and weakened the traditional ones. Some traditional forces lost their power. At the same time, the emerging bourgeoisie was not able to continue to live in the old ways. The antagonisms of those peasants who did not receive land, those traditional forces who lost sociopolitical and economic tranquillity, and the newly generated and maladjusted

wage laborers were, in the process of capital accumulation, sharply radicalized. This radicalization was further reinforced by the contradictions accompanying Western, especially American, imperial domination of whole spheres of Iranian society.

Although Marx has been sharply criticized for his overemphasis on the revolutionary character of the proletarian class, his attribution of the adjective "revolutionary" to the working class, so far as the Iranian laboring class is concerned, can be credited. As a matter of fact the working class played a vital role in defining the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979. Thus the struggle of the Iranian working class and the Iranian Revolution, which was most definitely aimed at imperial domination and capital exploitation, are certainly consistent with Marxian insight.

But the most important question is, Could the working class in Iran, by itself, without the participation of other social classes or actors in the revolutionary movement, have brought about the revolution of 1978-1979? The political history of Iran in the last hundred years shows that, without class coalition, revolutionary movements have been doomed to failure, or have failed to materialize at all. In addition, given the fact that leftist persuasion in Iran has always been like an island within the ocean of conservatism and such a tendency was in an apparent contradiction with the ideology and class interests of the conservative forces, it was indeed surprising to see leftist victories in the struggle for implementation of a radically fundamental transformation of the existing capitalistic social relations.

The answer to the question posed above leads to another question. If the interests of the Left and Right were so contradictory and antagonistic, why did the former enter into a coalition with the latter? An answer can be found in Ayatollah Khomeini's firm stand against imperialism and its agents. Besides invoking the radical tradition of shi'ism, which mobilized a tremendous portion of the population, Khomeini's irreconcilable stand against capital/imperial domination generated a common bond among all social forces with the exception of the pro-shah elements. All revolutionary forces wanted the shah to abdicate.⁷⁵ In this connection, a worker stated that Ayatollah Khomeini had "brought the eyes of the world on our problems here and made them see that the Shah is a puppet of the foreigners who are stealing our money."⁷⁶ Hence, it was the radical appeal of shi'ism, invoked by Khomeini, that organized the social forces and led the Revolution. This does not conform to the Marxian theoretical formulation.⁷⁷

4. MARXIST THOUGHT AND THE DYNAMICS OF RADICAL SOCIAL CHANGE

To conclude this chapter, the integration of Iran into the capitalistic economy will be discussed briefly.⁷⁸ Such analysis is formulated by those Marxist scholars who attempt, within the tradition of neo-Marxism or as followers of Marxian political thought, to respond to the criticism as to why revolution did not occur in the highly advanced capitalist centers of the West. Marxists argue that

these formations, by virtue of their military, political, technological, and economic superiority, exported their contradictions to the peripheries or the weakest links, where revolutionary upheavals tend to challenge the domination of capitalism.⁷⁹

Because this formulation directly bears on the Iranian Revolution, it is appropriate to analyze the linkage in some detail. According to Marx, the bourgeois class by means of sophisticated communication and highly developed forces of production will bring all nations, even barbarians, into civilization.

The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarian's intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.⁸⁰

There are two competing approaches within the Marxist school of thought. One adopted by Lenin and Luxemburg, is in full agreement with the Marxian thesis that capital is a self-expanding value and will lead to the breakdown of all pre-capitalist modes of production. Proponents of this approach believe that the continuity of capital accumulation lies in its expansion overseas. Capitalism, they claim, has to conquer the markets and exploit the raw materials of other countries or else die. Hence, the capitalist system is doomed to failure if it does not control the world market. The capitalist epoch thus can last as long as it maintains its domination at the cost of less-developed countries. Capitalism does not necessarily hinder development in peripheral areas, however. While Luxemburg argued that, for additional surplus value to be realized, new markets and consumers have to be brought into the system of capitalist relations, Lenin

maintained that, due to the limited internal investment opportunities in advanced capitalist countries, without world domination, further capital accumulation could not be achieved. In a sense, both are saying that for advanced capitalism to continue, imperialism, which is politicoeconomic domination of the Third World, is an absolute necessity. Capitalism thus understood is compelled to expand or die. Luxemburg even argues, more forcefully than Lenin, that capitalism will inevitably collapse if it does not have access to noncapitalist areas to which to export its contradictions. Overseas expansionism made great contributions to the growth of general welfare programs at home, which in turn mitigated class conflict, thereby saving capital's neck from the gallows tree.⁸¹ If dominated formations are allowed to develop fully and adopt a capitalistic image, who is going to export contradictions, basically unemployment, to whom?⁸² Dominated formations thus serve as a safety valve to prevent capitalism's explosion into a proletarian revolution. Despite this, both Lenin and Luxemburg argue for the promotion thesis, which is congruent with Marxian insight.⁸³

This argument, that is, development under imperial/capital domination, is seriously challenged by others, chief among them Mao Tse-Tung. For him, "International capitalism or imperialism will not permit the establishment in China of a capitalist society under bourgeois dictatorship. Indeed, the history of Modern China is a history of imperialist opposition to China's. . . . development of capitalism."⁸⁴ It follows that the expansion of capitalism to the Third World formations does not or may not lead to the development of capitalism in those areas. Therefore, Maoist political persuasion holds that no industrialization or

development occurs in imperialized formations.⁸⁵ In reality, Mao's thesis is further developed by the most popular Marxist scholars in the Monthly Review school of thought. These well-known theorists (Baran, Paul Sweezy, Harry Magdoff, Samir Amin, Andre Gunder Frank and others)⁸⁶ argue that the accumulation of capital on the world level leads to the acceleration of capital accumulation in the advanced countries and stagnation of capitalistic development or its hindrance in the peripheral countries, a view that stands in opposition to Marx, Lenin, and Luxemburg.

There is a good argument that capital accumulation inhibits the development of capitalism because the capitalist system motivated by profit maximization, is obviously in need of surplus extraction, which can be exacted from the peripheries in an unequal exchange process.⁸⁷ The accumulation of capital in advanced metropolitan areas can be better realized by maintaining and perpetuating an exploitive social relationship. As history proves, the development of Western European formations was accomplished largely through the employment of cheap labor at home in the colonized areas. Access to or possession of raw materials and the conquest of colonial markets made great contributions to the development of Western Europe. Neocolonialism, so far as domination and exploitation are concerned, also led to imperialization of the peripheries. None of the imperial formations achieved developmental ideals without an empire. Obviously then, Third World countries, given the superiority of imperial forces have been subjugated to massive and destructive external interventionism. Given the fact that Third World formations are unable to resist domination and

expropriation by the imperial metropolitan centers and have, in Wallerstein's words, no "external colonies to exploit," they have stagnated.⁸⁸

Another contributing factor to the backwardness of the Third World lies in the fact that the means necessary for developmentalism are possessed exclusively by the imperial formations. All these countries have some shared characteristics. For instance, they all depend on the capitalist centers for the supply of technology; a majority of them need foreign capital; all of them are in need of the market relationships that always function in favor of monopolistic capitalist centers. This applies even to the Middle Eastern countries with abundant oil money. The problem is reinforced by political dependence.⁸⁹ According to Aijaz Ahmad, "There is also the fact of political dependence; witness, for example, the case of the oil-producing Arab countries which are unable to defend the one cause they call their own--the Palestinian cause."⁹⁰ It follows from what has been said that the colonial/imperial forces placed the burden of capital accumulation on the shoulders of the dominated formations. No wonder then that the end result appeared to be uneven development: a highly developed center and less developed peripheries.⁹¹

Although the logic of this analysis cannot be disputed, it is not necessarily true that no industrialization or development takes place under imperial/capital domination. The Iranian case to some extent supports this assertion. In fact, the Iranian economy, since 1960, and as a result of capitalist development has experienced some changes though not a basic transformation.⁹² In the 1960s, GNP grew by 8 percent reaching 14.2 percent in 1972-1973. It rose by 30.3 percent in 1973-1974, and, in 1974-1975, it was running at 42 percent.

The growth rate of the GNP between 1972 and 1978 was increased from \$17.3 billion to approximately \$54.6 billion. GNP per capita also rose to \$450 in 1971, and reached \$2,400 in 1978.⁹³

Some progress also took place within the industrial sector. Between 1934 and 1940, Iran had almost 200 industrial plants, which recruited between 50,000 and 60,000 workers. But the actual industrialization programs began in the 1960s. Sugar factories were expanded; cement, tobacco, and textile industries were established. Between 1965 and 1975, industrial growth was rapid, some 15 percent annually. In 1977, there were 250,000 manufacturing plants in Iran which employed nearly 2.5 million workers. A steel mill was established in Isfahan; and the petrochemical industry was expanding. The growth of assembly factories for cars, trucks, buses, machine tools, and so on was phenomenal. Although industrialization in the 1960s had been limited to light industry, the Fifth Plan's (1973-1978) programs involved a shift from import substitution to capitalization in steel, metals, and petrochemicals.⁹⁴

The state played a major role in the growth and expansion of capitalism, especially in private capital accumulation in industrial development and other big sectors. Under the third, fourth and fifth plans, government investment in industrial development was 53.1 percent, 38.8 percent, and 40 percent, respectively; and with the increase of oil prices in 1973, it reached 60 percent. The private sector was also generously financed and supported by the government. The government encouraged banking systems, expanded credit, and protected large private capital, especially from taxation. To prevent the concentration of industrial

firms in the capital, the government gave further exemptions to those who buttressed the development of the private sector.

In a sense, the government was helping to create a state-dependent industrial bourgeoisie. As this class was formed, the state sold off the government-owned industries to it or to any other individual who was loyal to the court. All in all, it was the common good which geared towards the promotion of the socioeconomic status of the ex-landlords, the courtiers, free masonaries, top level governmental functionaries, high-ranking military and security officers, etc.⁹⁵ For instance, one of these state-supported big capitalist, Ali Rezaei in an interview with Le Monde stated that "I could never, without the help and protection of His Majesty, the Shah, have achieved the position I have now." Seventy percent of the capital of Ali Rezaei and his shareholders consisted of governmental loans at low interest rates. His companies in Tehran did not have to pay taxes for five years and those outside of the capital for twelve years. By Ali Rezaei's own admission, those privileges along with cheap electricity and tariff protection enabled him to make "an annual 50 to 80 percent net profit from this investment."⁹⁶ Le Monde adds that with such an enormous profit or capital gain, the original capital could be recouped within two to three years.⁹⁷

In addition to oil money, foreign capital also played a role in the development of capitalism in Iran. Over two hundred firms invested in the Iranian economy in the mid-1970s. The largest of these were from the United States and Japan. The former, by late 1974, had forty-three firms operating in Iran; the latter,

following the increase in oil prices, in 1975-1976, was responsible for 43 percent of all foreign investment, mostly in capital-intensive petrochemical industries.⁹⁸

Since the expansion of the industrial sectors urgently required infrastructure, roads were built, ports, dams, and power stations erected. Moreover, social programs, including education, were expanded. In the aftermath of "the White Revolution," educational institutions were developed and literacy increased. Whereas in 1959, there were only 2,507 Iranian students in the United States, in 1978-1979 there were 47,647. The average annual increase of such students was 225 percent.⁹⁹ The number of campuses expanded fivefold. The number of educated individuals also increased as the educational system was extended to include rural areas.¹⁰⁰ This brief analysis clearly answers the inhibition argument and supports the theoretical formulations of Marx, Lenin, and Luxemburg.

I am not trying to argue that colonialism leads to progress and development. On the contrary, quality development and fundamental change were lacking in Iran. The engine of the superficial quantitative changes that did occur was oil. The money obtained from oil was spent to import goods produced by the industrialized capitalist metropolies.¹⁰¹ By exporting oil and importing finished goods, the Iranian economy became an integral link in the imperial chain at the world level.¹⁰²

The growth of the oil industry was not tied to the development of the Iranian economy. Oil exports were largely in response to the developed capitalistic formations' need for fuel. Oil exports increased industrial production and the

export of ready-made goods to Iran, where petro dollars had created a huge consumer market. The oil money, in fact, encouraged the demands for imported goods. More oil money meant more consumption. This process in turn encouraged the import of even more manufactured goods from the metropolis. The Iranian market was then dominated by goods manufactured for its consumption.¹⁰³ And the political economy of the country was based primarily on the export of oil and gas, making up some 98 percent of the country's exports in 1977.

Reliance on the export of a single product can be properly defined as a vulnerable and dependent policy.¹⁰⁴ Iran by no means had the power to control the markets of the metropolitan centers. A change of policy or any shifts in demand, or any manipulation by imperial oil cartels could lead to disaster. If certain policies were not congruent with the cartel's interests, the latter could easily jeopardize the position of the oil-producing countries.¹⁰⁵

Moreover, dependence on a single product's economy, oil led to the development of the "service sector" at the cost of the productive. In other words, oil money did not make a greater contribution to the productive development. The means of production were not developed to an extent that would lead to production and independent development. Instead, the service sectors boomed. Iran witnessed constantly expanding employment opportunities and inflated demands for the consumption of goods and services that fulfilled the desires of the ruling Iranian comprador bourgeoisie. The expenditure of excessive oil money created more demands for goods and services, the satisfaction of which culminated in accumulation of billions in capital by the comprador bourgeoisie.

During all this time Iran was meeting the demand by exporting oil and importing the goods in demand. Hence, the dominant class was making its millions not from production but from imported goods. Even in the modern sector of the economy, the plants that produced finished goods were assembling, not making, the basic elements of the demand goods.¹⁰⁶ This type of surface development was not leading toward long-run economic strength.

Such an excessive expenditure had a negative impact on overall development. For instance, agriculture was subjected to destruction. Nearly at the gates of the boasted "Great Civilization," agricultural production, as the prime minister himself stated, was not able to feed more than 7 percent of the population. Land reform was thus doomed to failure.¹⁰⁷

More important, the oil revenues were not properly allocated to developmental programs. The highest percentage was spent on the purchase of sophisticated weapons. Although this sector was highly developed and modernized and was expected to be in 1980 the fifth most powerful conventional army in the world, it was not independent. In reality, excessive expenditure in this sector appeared to mean more dependence on the imperial military industrial complex which has become a government within the government of the United States¹⁰⁸. As the Iran-Iraq war clearly proves, the Iranian armed forces, though reinforced by mobilization forces, revolutionary guards, the ideology of revolution, all with high nationalistic and religious morale, have not been able to bring the seven-year-old war, in which a quarter of a million Iranians are believed to have lost their lives, to a successful conclusion.¹⁰⁹ The reason for this failure lies in the dependent nature

of the Iranian army. It has been trained and armed by the U.S. without American advisers. Perhaps because of the sophisticated nature of the weaponry, the Iranian army simply cannot function. Petrodollars bought the weapons, but the army lacks the basic military technology to reproduce them or to manufacture the spare parts. It is largely because of this that the revolutionary regime has to purchase spare parts and needed weapons at exorbitant prices on the black market.¹¹⁰ Thus, excessive expenditure on defense was a drain on the country's resources, but it made an important contribution to the imperial treasury by resolving its contradictions. In addition, it suppressed regional and domestic progressive forces. Highly centralized absolutism had emerged, and this in turn provides a stable environment for the investment opportunities and capital gains that benefit metropolitan countries.

Iran, thus, did not have an independent technology, nor did it possess technical capacity. Foreign advisors and technicians needed to develop dependent assembled industries and to plan industrial outputs, directions, and growth. Indeed, every year millions of dollars were spent on imported technicians and experts. And the costs of technical supervision were usually a large part of the total expenses of production. This type of dependent development might have been unavoidable at the beginning of capital accumulation and establishment of assembly industries, but such dependent development, especially in military technology, training and advising, in the assembly of automobile parts and various machinery, and in the petrochemical industry, to mention only a few areas, continued to the very eve of the Revolution.¹¹¹

In pursuit of dependent development, however, the destiny of the Iranian comprador bourgeoisie was closely tied to oil revenues and external political support. But the revenues from oil were misallocated and misspent. Given the fact that the regime lacked a social base, it badly needed to create a bourgeoisie as well as a functionary class that would support the metropolis-dominated ruling class. The state, as mentioned earlier, supported ex-landowners and loyalists with the oil money. The professional bureaucratic functionaries too were, at least indirectly, given a green light to make millions—of course not from production but from theft, bribery, commissions, and the like. These classes were the agents of the dominant metropolitan bourgeoisie class controlled and directed multinational corporations in Iran, which itself was a dominated formation. The dominant classes served as agents of the "hegemonic class" in the capitalistic centers because their power and wealth depended on the market metropolis: the export of oil and raw materials. If this link was broken, the survival of these classes would undoubtedly be in jeopardy.¹¹²

No wonder then that Iran witnessed massive corruption, regressive distribution of common goods, distortions in the allocation of resources, destruction of agriculture, a consumptionist society, dependent assembly industries, and, above all, cultural and political repression. Such bankrupt policies resulted from the character of the regime. The Iranian state was, to a large extent, created by external interventionism in the post-World War II era and in 1953. In the entire period of consolidation, it was fully supported by outside forces. It was

an integral part of world capitalism and greatly benefited from and was supported politically and militarily by the hegemonic centers of capitalism.

This kind of development was accompanied by a contradiction associated with the imperial policies of the dominant centers. On the one hand, they encouraged economic development and industrialization based on the Western model; on the other hand, for political and military reasons, they supported the corrupt regime of the shah, which had no social base. The anachronistic monarchy in Iran simply did not fit into the framework of basic change.¹¹³ Fundamental change involves participation and integration of new forces into the political superstructure and even the radical transformation of the existing structures. This in turn culminates in the broadening of sociopolitical base of the regime. This is what the metropolitan bourgeoisie could not afford. Democratization in the dominated formation would surely, as it tends to do throughout the world, challenge the realization of surplus value sought by metropolises in exploitative social relations of production. Hence, world domination, in the face of oppositional forces and maintenance of the capitalist order, requires militarism both in the center of the system and at its periphery.¹¹⁴ In this context, Nicos Poulantzas states that the capitalistic mode of production cannot exist without subordinating other modes and forms of production. This may result in uneven development between the dominant capitalistic centers and the imperialized Third World formations.¹¹⁵

Empirical evidence from the Iranian formation supports this inhibition thesis. To begin with, Iranian higher education, as was mentioned earlier, was

expanded, yet Iranian universities admitted only 60,000 students out of 290,000 applicants in 1977. Many of the remaining high school graduates turned to drugs and alcohol. The percentage of students in higher educational institutions in Iran was lower than the average in the other Middle Eastern countries.¹¹⁶ And only 8.1 percent of the peasant population, which constituted 60 percent of the population, could get into high school, and very few into higher education. This clearly shows that Iranian education was not very much advanced.¹¹⁷

The educational system was extremely poor. Higher education was tightly controlled by the government. Critical political thinkers had no place within Iranian society. Those professors who attempted to promote creative thinking were imprisoned or dismissed. Those students who joined picket lines were shot to death or arrested or dispatched to military garrisons. All scientifically creative books were banned. There was no free movement of ideas, nor were there responsible political debates. Institutions of higher education were intended to produce followers who were not to question the regime.¹¹⁹

In health matters, though, infant mortality, which constituted 20 percent before the 1960s, declined to 12 percent in 1972. In the same year Iran had only 519 hospitals with 42,000 beds--one for every 727 Iranians. Acute health problems became worse in 1974. Even though the number of beds increased to 45,000, there was still only one bed for every 800 people. In rural areas, where 60 percent of the total Iranian population lived, there were no hospitals at all. Between 1974 and 1977 a few hospitals, for propaganda purposes, had been constructed in

those villages located on the main roads. These newly-built institutions lacked medicine or doctors and in most cases both.¹²⁰

The doctor/patient ratio was very poor with too few doctors and too many patients. There was one doctor for every 2,699 people. In Tehran, there was one doctor for every 873 people, but in Ilam, Poshtkouh, and Zanjan, this ratio was 9,481 and 8,439, respectively. In Tabriz, there was one doctor per 5,589 people; in Kurdistan, one to 6,477.¹²¹ There was one dentist per 18,622 people throughout Iran. Tehran had one dentist per 5,051 (even Abrahamian's findings show only one per 5,626 people). On the other hand, Buyer Ahmad Kohkilvieh, Ilam and Poshtkoh, and Lorestan Province had one dentist per 86,500, 85,330 and 59,312 respectively. In Tabriz this ratio was 1:66,156; in Kurdistan, 1:57,294.

Inadequate housing also supports, to some extent, the inhibition thesis. According to Hamid Safari, the shortage of housing was so severe that at the end of the Fourth Plan (1968-1972), the government was short 1,715,000 residential units. In the cities almost eight people lived in one unit. In rural areas, where the houses are mostly built of mud and reeds, the problem was even worse. Thirty percent of peasant dwellings had only one room and in 48.8 percent of them more than three people lived in one room.¹²²

Instead of attempting to cope with the housing inadequacy and exorbitant rents, the government signed a six million dollar contract with West Germany to build two thousand luxurious villas at the beach areas of the Persian Gulf, presumably for tourists, but actually for the shah's use. At the time, Tehran

did not have a sewage system. Traffic was a nightmare; and pollution was a common phenomenon.¹²³

An inquiry into income distribution in Iran makes the inhibition thesis even more appealing. Because the ruling comprador class and its dependent bourgeoisie plundered the resources of the country, the poor and laboring classes were placed in a disadvantageous situation. For instance, in 1975 an unskilled laborer made \$2 to \$3 per eight-hour day; semiskilled labor earned \$3 to \$4 a day; skilled laborers \$4 to \$7. A technician made \$250 to \$300 per month; a craftsman \$350 to \$500. Annual income in urban areas was very uneven, however, the median income of urban Iranians did not exceed \$186(\$1=68 rials) in a month.¹²⁴

In rural areas, the situation was even worse. Between 1974 and 1975, the annual income of the peasantry was this: 67 percent of the peasants made less than 60,000 rials in a year; 24.5 percent made an annual income between 60,000 and 120,000 rials; and 8.5 percent earned over 120,000 rials. These figures indicate that 91.5 percent of the peasants lived in poverty. The gap in income between those who lived in urban and rural areas was alarmingly great. Whereas the urban dwellers, who formed 40 to 44 percent of the total population, had a 53.6 percent share in GNP, those in rural areas, who formed some 56 to 60 percent of the population, had no more than 9.4 percent. While the per capita income in the urban centers was \$1,500 per annum, for rural Iran it was only \$251. The disparity would certainly be worse between regions.¹²⁵

In sum, at the dawn of the Revolution, illiteracy still prevailed. The doctor-patient ratio had worsened; the rate of child mortality was high; the country

suffered from the lowest ratio of hospital beds to people in the Middle East. More importantly, the country, which in the early 1960s was self-sufficient and exported food, by the mid-1970s was spending a billion dollars a year on imported agricultural goods.¹²⁶ According to one study, "more foreign exchange was spent on silks and tailored clothing than on electrical machinery, more on jewelry than agricultural equipment; and nearly as much on perfume as fertilizer."¹²⁷ If we compare the capital city, where most services were concentrated, with the provincial cities, appalling inequalities gap are immediately noticeable. For instance, many of the factories were located in Tehran. Tehran had the highest literacy rate. The growth of GNP, as mentioned earlier, did not benefit all Iranians equally. It made a greater contribution to the wealthy. It was these factors in combination that led to the intensification of class/ethnic awakening and antagonistic sociopolitical relations.¹²⁸

It follows from what has been said that capitalistic expansion to Iran led to capital accumulation in the form of uneven development. Capital accumulation stemmed from the inherent contradictions of advanced capitalism. The expansion of capital to peripheries with a large consumptionist market provides a solution to those contradictions. If capitalism allows for the formation of a fully developed society, it simply cannot sustain itself.

Yet the solution itself becomes a problem. That is to say, the irreconcilable contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletarian classes is shifted from the center to the peripheries, where these contradictions are situated between the core dominated by imperialist forces and revolutionary national

liberation movements. This explains why the peripheral formations play a politically active role in revolutionary emancipation.¹²⁹

Revolutions in the Third World formations are seen as the result of uneven development. This is the most important strength of the Marxist analysis and can be supported by empirical evidence. There has not occurred any revolution, as predicted by Marx, in the hegemonic capitalist centers. Nor has there been a proletarian uprising in these formations. Technological and structural changes in advanced capitalism along with exploitative domination of the imperialized Third World formations have transformed the working class in the centers to a conciliatory force. In the meantime, capital accumulation at the world level, which leads to the exploitation of the masses in Third World countries, has mobilized the oppressed into a revolutionary force that has successfully challenged imperial domination and still does. (China, Cuba, Vietnam, Algeria, Iran, and Nicaragua are good examples.)¹³⁰ In the Iranian case, if Iran's massive petrodollars injected into the bankrupt economy of world capitalism resolved the contradictions of the core societies, this infusion, in turn, led to the development and intensification of antagonism between the oppressed and oppressing classes. The law of uneven development sharpened the class character of contradictions in Iran, placing the exploited/oppressed class in direct class conflict with the inter and intra classes. On the basis of this school of thought, the contradictions of imperial capital were shattered in Iran, which, as a result of integration into world capitalism, formed the "weakest link" in the chain of imperial order. Iran,

therefore, was one of those dominated formations that paid a high price for the bankruptcy of the capitalistic metropolis.¹³¹

However, both approaches, when examined, fail to incorporate into their theoretical frame of analysis the culture of the oppressed. They do not necessarily see religion as a potential mobilizing force. This interpretation, nonetheless, can be granted, for, if one takes into consideration the outcome of religious movements, one can easily observe the reactionary perspectives of those forces that take the side of capital and private ownership. But, so far as shi'ism is concerned, this tendency does not apply to the radicalism of the shi'i Islam. The Iranian case, therefore, repudiates the validity of the narcotization thesis set forth by the radical school of thought. Moreover, the inhibition thesis, as well as the thesis of Monthly Review adherents, is flawed in that it reduces the analysis to a single contradiction between dominant and dominated formations. Of course, this is not to say that this contradiction is insignificant. It really is a destructive contradiction. But this reductionism tends to ignore the critical role of labor in capital accumulation, class formation, the extraction of surplus value from the workers, and class struggle, which constitutes the engine, the driving force behind such historical development. Thus these formulations leave out the active role of the classes in the epochal struggle for emancipation.¹³² The strengths and weaknesses of these theoretical approaches will be explored in the following concluding chapter. Here, suffice it to say that, despite some theoretical defects, the movements of Third World formations supply actual data for the confirmation of those formulations.

ENDNOTES

¹Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), pp. vii-xvi. See also Trent Schroyer, The Critique of Domination (Boston: Beacon Press, 1976), pp. 15-37; Raya Dunayevskaya, Marxism and Freedom (London: Pluto Press, 1971), pp. 21-24; Nikolai Bukharin, Historical Materialism: A System of Sociology (New York: International Publishers, 1928), pp. ix-xv; Mikhail Suslov, Karl Marx -- Brilliant Teacher and Leader of the Working Class (Moscow: Progress Publisher, 1970), pp. 7-9, 11-14; Kwame Nkrumah, Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism (New York: International Publishers, 1966), pp. ix-xx. For a systematically critical perspective, see H. Marcuse, Counter-Revolution and Revolt (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 1-8; idem, An Essay on Liberation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), introduction. For a better illustration of the case under consideration, see Michael Harrington, The Vast Majority: A Journey to the World's Poor (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977). Harrington approaches oppression and lack of freedom from the economist's point of view and shows how distorted reality is. He thinks the present world order is unjust and it is simply maintained by force. See the introduction to his book.

²Marcuse, Reason and Revolution; preface. For a detailed analysis of this school of thought, see Raymond Geuss, The Idea of a Critical Theory (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981), chap. 3.

³Ibid., pp. 3-6. See also Erich Fromm, A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and Its Tradition (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1986), pp. 7-16; Geuss, A Critical Theory, p. 58.

⁴Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology (New York: International Publishers, 1969), pp. 3-26. See also Karl Marx, The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (New York: International Publishers, 1964), pp. 170-193.

⁵Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Works, vol. 1 (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1977), pp. 311-347.

⁶Bukharin, Historical Materialism, pp. 72-83.

⁷Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Works, p. 314.

⁸Ibid., pp. 315-331. See also Bukharin, Historical Materialism, pp. 72-79; Robert C. Tucker (ed.), The Marx-Engels Reader (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), pp. 3-7; David McLellan, The Thought of Karl Marx: An Introduction (London: Macmillan, 1980), pp. 134-138; Anvar Khamah'i,

Diyaliktik-i Tabi cat va Tarikh (Dialectic of Nature and History), (1357) pp. 125-147.

⁹Karl Marx and Frederich Engels, The Communist Manifesto (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), pp. 79-94; Douglas Kellner, "Human Nature and Capitalism in Adam Smith and Karl Marx," in The Subtle Anatomy of Capitalism, ed. Jesse Schwartz, (Santamonica, California: Good Year Publishing, 1977), pp. 66-85.

¹⁰Bukharin, Historical Materialism, p. 75; M. M. Bober, Karl Marx's Interpretation of History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), pp. 32-39. For more information, see Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey, History of Political Philosophy, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 763-765; Karl Marx, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, ed. D. J. Strle (New York: International Publishers, 1977): "There are three aspects in every thought which is logically real or true: the abstract or rational form, which says what something is; the dialectical negation which says what something is not; the speculative concrete comprehension. A is also that which it is not; A is non-A. These three aspects do not constitute three parts of logic, but are moments of everything that is logically real or true. They belong to every philosophical concept. Every concept is rational, is abstractly opposed to another, and is united in comprehension together with its opposites. This is the definition of dialectic" (p. 32). For a better definition of dialectics, see Frederick Engels, Dialectics of Nature (New York: International Publishers, 1960), pp. 26-34. George Novack's sharp criticism of formal logic is illuminating. He effectively demonstrates what a dialectic really means and how it can be applied to the stages of historical development. For example, in criticizing formal logic, Novack argues that the axiom A equals A is correct only if they remain unchanged. But it is also true that A may not equal A. That is to say, the equation is subject to change. For example, if a decade ago a penny did have a value, a purchasing capacity, today it does not have such a value. Let's say that a penny (A) could buy a match, but today, as a result of inflation, it buys nothing. Hence, A equals zero to non-A. In the course of inflationary economy, it has simply turned into its opposite. Hence, in terms of dialectical analysis, A is both A and non-A. See his An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism, (New York: Merit Publishers, 1969), pp. 31-39. Finally, for greater insight, see George Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness (London: Merlin Press, 1971), pp. 1-26; George Sabine, A History of Political Theory (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1938), pp. 682-714. For a good account on dialitical analysis, see "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole," in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), pp. 106-125.

¹¹Louis Althusser, For Marx (London: Verso, 1969), p. 89-128.

¹²Marx, "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole," in Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, pp. 170-193; John

Hoffman, Marxism and the Theory of Praxis (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1975), pp. 47-71; Engels, Dialectics of Nature, chapter II. For further information, see the following sources: Goran Therborn, Science, Class and Society: On the Formation of Sociology and Historical Materialism (London: NLB, 1977), pp. 386-398; McLellan, The Thought of Karl Marx, chap. 3; L. Colletti, "Marxism and the Dialectic," New Left Review, vol. 93 (September-October 1975):3-29, Althusser, For Marx, pp. 163-218.

¹³Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, chap.1 Marx, The German Ideology, see the chapter on Feuerbach, Opposition of the Materialistic and Idealistic Outlook; see also Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 312-323.

¹⁴Marx, Wage-Labour and Capital. Value, Price and Profit, (New York: International Publishers, 1981), pp. 1-13, 17-25: "The free laborer sells his very self. He auctions off eight, ten, twelve, fifteen hours of his life, one day like the next, to the highest bidder, to the owners of raw materials, tools, and means of life, e.g., to the capitalist. The Laborer's daily life belongs to whomsoever buys them. The worker leaves the capitalist, to whom he has sold himself, as soon as he chooses, and the capitalist discharges him as often as he see fit, as soon as he no longer gets any use, or not the required use, out of him. But the worker, whose only source of income is the sale of his labour power, cannot leave the whole capitalist class, unless he gives up his own existence" (p. 20). On alienation, see Marx, The Grundrisse (New York: Harper and Row, 1972). Chaps. 5, 6, 7, and 12. See also idem, Capital, vol. I.

¹⁵Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, pp. 81-91, 106-119 on "estranged labor". For Marx, objectification constitutes the practice of alienation. For a general elaboration, see Bertell Ollman, Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 141-156; Erich Fromm, Marx's Concept of Man (New York: Fredrick Ungar, 1972), pp. 43-58. For critical perspectives on alienation, see Ernest Mandel and George Novack, The Marxist Theory of Alienation (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), pp. 9-63.

¹⁶Marx, The German Ideology, pp. ix-xviii, 3-16. See also Ollman, "Dialectic as Outlook," in Alienation, pp. 52-60; Engels, Dialectics of Nature, pp. 38-40.

¹⁷Marx, The German Ideology, pp. 16-22.

¹⁸Marx, "Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy," in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 4. See also G. A. Cohen, Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), chap. 2. See also William H. Shaw, Marx's Theory of History (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), pp. 8-51; Maurice Godelier, "Structure and

Contradiction in Capital," in Ideology in Social Science: Readings in Critical Social Theory, ed. Robin Blackburn (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), pp. 334-368.

¹⁹Marx, "Preface to a Contribution," p. 4.

²⁰Karl Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy (New York: International Publishers, 1982), pp. 90-102. See also G. Glezerman and G. Kursanov, Historical Materialism: Basic Problems (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968), pp. 92-108.

²¹The Marx-Engels Reader, pp. 4-5.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 5. See also Shaw, Marx's Theory of History, p. 100.

²³Marx, Communist Manifesto, p. 79.

²⁴Marx, The German Ideology, pp. 4-27.

²⁵It is obviously true that the owners of the means of production have always utilized in a conscious manner their usurped political privileges to perpetuate and defend their class interests. Hence, class struggle cannot be ruled out in a capitalistic formation. For further information, see Marx's Communist Manifesto, where he argues that class struggle can be resolved only by the ascendancy of the working class to power and the suppression of capitalism.

²⁶According to James Bill, "Although the revolution was a multiclass phenomenon in which the people of Iran rose en masse against a hated and decrepit old system, it was the shi'a religious establishment that, in fact, directed and took control of the revolution. While the ulama played a critical organizational role in the movement, shi'a Islam became the overarching ideology of the revolution. From their mosques, schools, cells (hojrehs), and holy shrines, the shi'a clerics personally and effectively put together an opposition organization that stretched from one end of the country to the other. It was this structure that mobilized the population and that was ultimately responsible for the collapse and destruction of the Pahlavi regime" ("Power and Religion in Revolutionary Iran," in The Middle East Journal 36, no. 1 [Winter 1982]:22-47).

²⁷Tucker, The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 608.

²⁸Marx, Class Struggle in France: 1848-1850 (New York: International Publishers, 1980), p. 34; Bertell Ollman, "Marx's Use of Class," The American Journal of Sociology 73, no. 5 (March 1968):573-580.

²⁹Eric J. Hooglund, Land and Revolution in Iran: 1960-1980 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), pp. 138-139.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 140.

³¹*Ibid.*, pp. 140-141.

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 142-148; Farhad Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution in Iran (New York: New York University Press, 1980), pp. 88-96; *idem*, "Urban Migrants and the Revolution," Iranian Studies 13, nos. 1-4 (1980):257-277.

³⁴E. Abrahamian, Iran Between Two Revolutions, pp. 326-347.

³⁵Sepehr Zabih, The Communist Movement in Iran (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 64-70. See also Abrahamian, Iran, chap. 7.

³⁶James A. Bill, The Politics of Iran. Groups, Classes, and Modernization, pp. 73-74.

³⁷According to Samuel Huntington, the coalition of guns and brains and numbers and guns leads to stability. But the alliance of brains and numbers results in violence and revolution. See his Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 232-242.

³⁸See Nikki R. Keddie, Roots of Revolution, chap. 9; Robert Graham, Iran: The Illusion of Power, chap. 12; Abrahamian, Iran, chap. 10.

³⁹See Holy Quran, Al Emran, verse 140 *Va Allah-i La yohobbu al zalimin...* [God loveth not the oppressors]. See also Hadid, verse 25 in Quran *La gad Arsalna Rasulna Bil Bayyenat'i va Anzlna Maahom Al Kitabi va al mizan liyagum alnas bil-Gist* [We sent the prophets with clear proofs accompanied by the Book and the Balance so that the people would rise up to bring about equality.]

⁴⁰Hamid Algar, "The Oppositional Role of the Ulama in Twentieth Century Iran," in Scholars, Saints, and Sufis, ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), chap. 9. See also Ali Shariati, On the Sociology of Iran, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1979), pp. 111-120.

⁴¹See Algar, "The Oppositional Role"; Keddie, Roots of Revolution, pp. 8-9; James Bill, "Power and Religion in Revolutionary Iran" in The Middle

East Journal 36, 1 (1982):24-35. For a detailed analysis, see Erwin I. J. Rosenthal, Political Thought in Medieval Islam, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 21-27. For the issue of the separation of religion from politics, see R. Khomeini, Velayat-i Fagih: Hukumat-i Islami (Islamic Government, the Jurist's Trusteeship, n.p., 1976), p. 23. See also Hamid Algar, Religion and the State in Iran: 1785-1906 (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), p. 3.

⁴²Jalal Al-e Ahmad, Dar Khidmat va Khiyant'i Rowshanfikran [In Service and Betrayal of Intellectuals] (1357), pp. 12-14.

⁴³"The Message of Ayatollah Khomeini to the Brave People of Iran on the Occasion of Moharram," in Iran Erupts, ed. Ali-Reza Nobari, pp. 229-231. See also Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Iman Khomeini, trans. and ann. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), pp. 242-245.

⁴⁴James A. Bill, "Catholic and Shi'a Clerics Lead Wave of Liberation," Los Angeles Times, Friday 21, 1985. See also Ali Shariati, Islam Shenasi [Islamology], lesson 13, 1972, (Tehran: Khwarazmi Press), pp. 14-15.

⁴⁵Abrahamian, Iran, pp. 492-495; F. Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development, pp. 211-247; S. Irfani, Revolutionary Islam in Iran, pp. 96-101.

⁴⁶T. Skocpol and Ellen Kay Trimberger, "Revolutions and the World Historical Development of Capitalism," in Social Change in the Capitalist World Economy, ed. Immanuel Wallerstein, 1978, pp. 121-137.

⁴⁷On integration, see Patrick Clawson, "The Internationalization of Capital and Capital Accumulation in Iran and Iraq," Insurgent Sociologist 7, no. 2 (Spring 1977):64-73.

⁴⁸Keddie, Roots of Revolution, p. 39.

⁴⁹The Russo-Iranian Wars of 1804-1813 and 1826-1828 and the Anglo war of 1857 generated the following treaties: Golestan (1813); Torkmanchai (1828); and the Treaty of Paris (1857). The first two resulted in the loss of Georgia, Armenia; and part of Azerbaijan and the payment of 3 million pounds as war reparations to the tsar. More important, in addition to the loss of revenues, political prestige, human lives, and territory, both Russia and Britain forced economic, commercial, and political capitulation. Moreover, Qajars, on the basis of the Paris Treaty, were forced to give up all claims to Afghanistan. See Abrahamian, Iran, chap. 2; and M. Atkin, Russia and Iran 1780-1828 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), p. 159.

⁵⁰Abrahamian, Iran Between Two Revolutions, pp.50-61.

⁵¹H. Bashiriyeh, The State and Revolution in Iran, pp.11-12 Abrahamian, p.32. Between 1907-1925, landed class and professional civil servants occupied all cabinet positions and 81 percent of parliamentary seats belonged to those two classes (50 percent landlords and 31 percent professional functionaries). The Bazaris got only 5 percent and the ulama 13 percent. The oligarchy thus dominated the parliament refusing to allow the participation of non-aristocratic classes in politics. Between 1925-1941 the number of upper class deputies in Majles (Parliament) increased from 81 to 86 percent. And from 1941 to 1960 the landed class achieved a greater political power. About 57 percent of the Majles deputies came from this class. Eleven percent of Majles seats were taken by wealthy merchants, 11 percent by rich merchants; 20 percent by professional bureaucrats, 11 percent by civil servants, yet only 1 percent of the Majles deputies were from the lower class. In this period (1941-1960) out of 17 prime ministers, 15 came from landed class families and two from military class.

⁵²K. Sanjabi, Debates of the Lower House, 17th Majlis, 31st Meeting, p.3. (cited by Abrahamian, Iran, p.38).

⁵³M. Nariman, Debates of the Lower House, 17th Majlis, 30th Meeting, p.6, in *ibid.*, p.37)

⁵⁴A. Lusani, Senate Debates, First Senate, 191st Meeting, p.3, in *ibid.*, p.37)

⁵⁵See A. Ashraf, Iran: Imperialism, Class and Modernization from Above (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New School for Social Research, 1971).

⁵⁶Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto, p.91.

⁵⁷See Bill "Power and Religion in Revolutionary Iran," The Middle-East Journal 36, no. 1 (Winter 1982):24-27.

⁵⁸Zabih, The Communist Movement, pp.12-13.

⁵⁹E. Abrahamian, "The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Labor Movement in Iran, 1941-1953", in Continuity and Change in Modern Iran, ed. Michael E. Bonine and Nikki R. Keddie (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), pp.182-183.

⁶⁰Fred Halliday, "Iran: Trade Unions and the Working class Opposition," MERIP Reports 8, no. 71 (1978):7-13, esp. p. 8. Also see Abrahamian, "Strengths and Weaknesses," pp.186-188. For a good account of the Iranian working class, see Halliday, Iran, pp.173-210; M. S. Ivanov, "The Formation of the Working Class in Iran.," published in Car 13, no. 4 (1967):249-

250 (originally published in Sovetskaya 2 [1966], and cited by Ashraf Ahman, Iran, pp.332-346. For a better understanding of the political roles of the working class, see: Bizhan Jazani, Capitalism and Revolution in Iran, pp.125-131; and idem, Anti-Colonial Movement (1346 NP), pp.1-50.

⁶¹Abrahamian, "Strengths and Weaknesses," p.190.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Terisa Turner, "Iranian Oil Workers in the 1978-1979 Revolution", in Oil and Class Struggle, ed. Petter Nore and Terisa Turner (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp.272-292.

⁶⁴See N. Observer, "Prospects for a Free Trade Union Movement in Iran", AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News 20, no. 9 (September, 1965):5-6, cited by Ahmad Ashraf, Iran, pp. 332-346. For a better understanding of the conditions and opposition of the working class in Iran, see Ashraf in the above mentioned work.

⁶⁵The BBC in its December 4 Persian language broadcast announced that the Iranian oil workers had initiated a nationwide strike demanding that the shah must go. See The Militant, New York (15 December, 1978), p.3.

⁶⁶Fereidun Fesharaki. Revolution and Energy Policy in Iran (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1980), introduction.

⁶⁷Harry Magdoff and Paul Sweezy, "Iran: The New Crisis of American Hegemony," Monthly Review 30, no. 9(February 1979):1-24

⁶⁸See Turner, "Iranian Oil Workers in the 1978-1979 Revolution," Oil and Class Struggle (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp.281-282.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.282. For detailed analysis, see Richard Falk's interview with Ayatollah Khomeini, "One of the Great Water Sheds of Modern History," MERIP Reports 75-76 (1979):9-12. He also met with workers' representatives: "The sense we got was that there are important communists, left elements within the oil workers movement, but by far the dominant force within that setting accepts the guidance of Khomeini" (). For a good assessment, see Abrahamian, *ibid.*, p.3-8.

⁷⁰Abrahamian, "Strengths and Weaknesses," pp.200-202.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 201-202; S. Azad, "Workers and Peasants' Councils in Iran", Monthly Review 2 (October,1980):14-29. See also "How We Paralyzed the

Shah's Regime," which shows how workers were organized into a political movement. It was written by "a founder of the Association of Oil Industry Staff Employees," MERIP Reports 75/76:pp.20,27-28.

⁷²See The Militant, New York (15 December 1978), p.3.

⁷³Thomas Fiddick, "Marx's Theory and Strategy of Permanent Revolution," Social Theory and Practice 5, no. 1 (Fall,1978):49.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp.45-64

⁷⁵For the importance of class alliance in Iran see Al-Ahmad, Dar Khidmat va Khiyant-i rawshan-fikran [In Service and Betrayal of the Intellectuals], pp.9-80, esp. p.55. See also Nikki R. Keddie, "The Origins of the Religious-Radical Alliance in Iran," Past and Present 34 (July,1966):70-81.

⁷⁶See Turner, "Iranian Oil Workers," p. 284.

⁷⁷For the binding organizational role of shi'ism in the Iranian Revolution, see James Bill, "Power and Religion in Revolutionary Iran," Middle-East Journal 36, no. 1 (Winter,1982):22.

⁷⁸For the concept of integration or the theory of internationalization of capital, see Nicos Poulantzas, "The Internationalization of Capitalist Relations and the Nation State," in Classes in Contemporary Capitalism (London: New left Review, 1979), pp. 37-88; Thomas E. Weisskopf, "Capitalism and Underdevelopment in the Modern World," in The Capitalist System ed. Richard C. Edwards, Michael Reich, and Thomas E. Weisskopf (London: Prentice-Hall,1972), pp. 442-457; Patrick Clawson, "Capital Accumulation in Iran" in Oil and Class Struggle, ed. Petter Nore and Terisa Turner (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp.143-171; Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, "International Contradictions of Advanced Capitalism" in The Capitalist System, pp.467-473; and Stephen Hymer, "The Internationalization of Capital," Journal of Economic Issues 6, no. 1 (1972):91-111.

⁷⁹See Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, pp.78-83.

⁸⁰Marx, The Communist Manifesto, p.84.

⁸¹See V.I. Lenin (1917-1960) Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1975), pp.72-79; Rosa Luxemburg, The Accumulation of Capital (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), pp. 454-467.

⁸²Immanuel Wallerstein, "Friends as Foes," in The Political Economy: Readings in the Politics and Economics of American Public Policy, ed. Prof. Thomas Ferguson and Joel Rogers (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1984), pp. 327-334.

⁸³Ibid; Luxemburg, The Accumulation, pp. 365-367; Lenin, Imperialism, p.76.

⁸⁴Mao Tse-Tung; Selected Works of Mao-Tse Tung (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1977), vol.2, p.354.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp.354-355. This school of thought has been challenged by Warren, who calls it absurd.

⁸⁶See Paul Baran, The Political Economy of Growth (New York: Monthly Review, 1957); Baran and Paul Sweezy Monopoly Capital (New York: Monthly Review, 1966); Harry Magdoff, The Age of Imperialism, (New York: Monthly Review, 1969), Samir Amin, Accumulation on a World Scale (New York: Monthly Review, 1974), Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America (New York: Monthly Review, 1967).

⁸⁷See Samir Amin, Imperialism and Unequal Development (New York: Monthly Review, 1977), pp. 1-35.

⁸⁸Immanuel Wallerstein, "The State and Social Transformation: Will and Possibility," Politics and Society I (1971):359-364.

⁸⁹Aijaz Ahmad, "Imperialism and Progress," in Theories of Development, Mode of Production or Dependency, ed. Ronald H. Chilcote and Dale L. Johnson (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983), pp. 33-73.

⁹⁰Ibid., p.44.

⁹¹See Ian Roxborough, Theories of Underdevelopment (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 55-69; Ahmad, "Imperialism," pp. 45-47; Michael Lowy, The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development (London: Verso, 1981), pp.70-99; Paul Sweezy, Modern Capitalism and Other Essays (New York: Monthly Review, 1979), pp. 53-63.

⁹²Patrick Clawson, "The Internationalization of Capital and Capital Accumulation in Iran and Iraq," The Insurgent Sociologist 2, no. 2 (Spring, 1977): 64-73. See also his "Capital Accumulation in Iran" in Oil and Class Struggle, pp. 143-171.

⁹³Halliday; Iran, Dictatorship and Development, p.138

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 147-149.

⁹⁵Ibid., pp. 149-155. See also Abol-Hassan Banisadr and Paul Vieille, "Iran and the Multinationals," in Iran Erupts ed. Ali-Reza Nobari (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 24-33.

⁹⁶H. Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran] (Tehran: Poyan Press, 1357), pp. 117-119.

⁹⁷The interview with Le Monde is cited by H. Safari in above work. See p. 119.

⁹⁸Ibid.; Halliday, Iran, pp. 153-154

⁹⁹The data on Iranian students was obtained from the International Office in Austin, Texas. See Open Doors: Reports on International Educational Exchange, (1978-79). Iran is among the top three countries in sending students to the United States.

¹⁰⁰Abrahamian, Iran, pp. 446-447.

¹⁰¹Banisadr and Paul Vieille, "Iran and Multinationals," pp 24-27.

¹⁰²According to Poulantzas, the problems cannot be reduced to a mechanistic contradiction between the "base (internationalization of production) and a superstructural cover (national state) which no longer 'corresponds' to it." The transformation of superstructure depends on "the forms assumed by the class struggle in an imperialist chain marked by the uneven development as its links." See "Internationalization of Capitalist Realities," p.78-103; and, Banisadar and Vieille, "Iran and Multinationals," pp. 25-26, 27-30.

¹⁰³See Fred Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development, (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), pp. 138-140 and pp. 158-167. See also Ibid., "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," Third World Quarterly (Oct., 1979):7-8; for a further detailed analysis on this issue, see Ibid., "Iran: The Economic Contradictions," MERIP 69 (July-August 1978):9-18. In this connection, see Ibid., "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development and Religious Populism," JIA 36, 2 (Fall-Winter 1982/1983):187-207.

¹⁰⁴Homa Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, p. 325. See also A. Panah, "A Look at the Iranian Foreign Trade: Reliance on Oil is a

Vulnerable Policy," in Kayhan Havaiv (2 October 1985), p.14; idem, "A Glimpse into the Iranian Foreign Trade," in Kayhan (25 September 1985), p.14.

¹⁰⁵Halliday, Iran, p.170.

¹⁰⁶Banisadr and Vieille, "Iran and Multinationals," pp. 24-33. See also Bahram Tehrani, Pazhoheshi Dar Igtisad-i Iran [An Inquiry into Iranian Economy] (Paris: Khavaran Publications, 1986), vol. I, pp. 43-45; Halliday, Iran, p.15.

¹⁰⁷Is cited by aforementioned source, Banisadr. See also Halliday, Iran, pp. 156-159. For the failure of agriculture, see both sources. See also F.R. Dana, Ampiryalism ve Furupushi-i Kishavarzi, [Imperialism and Disintegration of Agriculture: A Theoretical Study, Iran as an Example] (Tehran: Maziar).

¹⁰⁸Fred Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development, pp. 62-63 and chapter 4.

¹⁰⁹Rouhollah Ramazani, Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 80-85.

¹¹⁰See Preliminary Inquiry into the Sale of Arms to Iran and Possible Diversion of Funds to the Nicaraguan Resistance: Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence, United States Senate, Feb. 2, 1987, pp. 1-57.

¹¹¹Jazani, Capitalism and Revolution in Iran, pp. 77-94.

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 88, 90-94. See also Banisadr and Vieille, "Iran and Multinationals," pp. 27-29; "Iran: What Past? What Future?" Marxism Today (April, 1979):12-109.

¹¹³Halliday, Iran, p. 172. See also Al, Ahmad, Jalal, Gharbzadagi (Westoxication) chaps. 6, 7.8, 9.

¹¹⁴Ibid. Al, Ahmad, Jalal, Gharbzadagi, pp. 33-42.

¹¹⁵Nicos Poulantzas, "The Present Phases of Imperialism and the Domination of the U.S.A.," in Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, pp. 42-43.

¹¹⁶Abrahamian, Iran, pp. 446-7. Halliday, Iran, p.222. See also Homa Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, pp. 287-290.

¹¹⁷Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran], pp. 86-94; Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, p. 289.

¹¹⁹Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran], pp. 90-93, Halliday, Iran, pp. 222-225.

¹²⁰Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran], pp. 186-190.

¹²¹Ibid, pp. 187-188; Abrahamian, Iran, p. 449.

¹²²Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran], pp. 190-195; Abrahamian, Iran, p. 447.

¹²³Ibid, Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran], p. 192; see also Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, pp. 283-285.

¹²⁴Ibid., pp.186-196

¹²⁵Ibid., Safari, Yak barras-i intigadi as vaz'-i Kanuni-i Igtesad-i Iran [A Critical Analysis of the Present Economic Condition of Iran], p. 197; Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, pp. 307-308.

¹²⁶Abrahamian, Iran, pp. 447-448.

¹²⁷R. Benedick, Industrial Finance in Iran (Boston: Division of Research, Harvard University, 1964), p.14.

¹²⁸Abrahamian, Iran, p. 449.

¹²⁹See Luxemburg, The Accumulation of Capital, pp. 454-467; Sweezy, Modern Capitalism, pp.1-14; Amin, Imperialism and Unequal Development, pp.1-15.

¹³⁰The Frankfurt school of thought would argue that the class conflict has transformed itself to a struggle between dominant and dominated formations. The leading representative of this school is Jurgen Habermas, Theory and Practice (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 197. See also Ernest Mandel, Trotsky: A Study in the Dynamic of His Thought, (London: NLB, 1979), pp.32-42.

¹³¹The concept "weak link in imperialist chain" was first developed by Lenin. Poulantzas followed Lenin in utilizing the concept "world level" as the imperialist chain. The chain is composed of links that develop unevenly. (By links are meant national social formations.) The development of the chain determines the nature of the links. But in the process of interaction, the weak link is subject to breaking. This type of characterization leads to the definition of the links in political, ideological, and economic terms. Hence, the imperialist chain is more than capital movement, decapitalization, and economic reductionism. See N. Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism (London: Verso, 1979), pp. 42-50.

¹³²See Joel C. Edelstein, "Dependency: A Special Theory Within Marxian Analysis," in Dependency and Marxism: Toward a Resolution of the Debate, ed. Ronald H. Chilcote (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982), pp.103-107.

CHAPTER VII

1. A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF THE THEORIES OF REVOLUTION

In this concluding chapter, the theories analyzed will be critically evaluated. The most important strength of the psychological approaches lies in the manageability of their unit of analysis. The microanalysis chosen enables these theoretical approaches to explain the origins of human grievances in a given social formation. They utilize critical variables, such as reversal-created insecurities, relative deprivation, discontent, and frustration. These factors broaden our knowledge of tensions, stresses, and strains as activating factors. These approaches effectively penetrate deeply rooted human suffering, bringing it to the center of attention. In other words, psychological models show us how unrealized expectations could erupt into violence. They also indicate how the violence-inducing variables in a society provoke violent attacks on the frustrating agents. The most fundamental theoretical strength of these approaches involves their cross-cultural and cross-national applicability, to the stresses, strains, frustration, deprivation, growth, and decline common to all social formations.¹

In reality, general theories of revolution, by and large, are rich in hypothesis formulation and conceptual schemata. They are broadly based formulations; that is, they can be applied cross-culturally and cross-nationally. These approaches are based in scholarship and effectively analyze human setbacks and grievances, (the psychological approach) or political conflict between the competing and conflicting multiple sovereigns or interest groups (the political conflict model). Certainly, the hypotheses and variables employed by these

approaches are politically relevant to the comparative study of political violence in cross-nationally different social formations. Moreover, in prerevolutionary societies, the variables of general theories can be easily identified.²

Notwithstanding their virtues, general theories of revolution (the J-curve, the RD model, functionalism, and the political conflict approach) suffer from several theoretical shortcomings. For instance, the J-curve hypothesis does not tell us how frustration, induced by a rapid reversal in socioeconomic conditions after a prolonged period of improvement, can stimulate a revolutionary state of mind, nor how we can tell when this state of mind has reached an intensity that is no longer tolerable. Does decline in socioeconomic status affect all individuals equally? If not, how do we explain the participation of those who have not experienced a decline in socioeconomic status? In Iran many individuals who were fairly well off and whose economic status had not declined, participated in the revolution. In addition, how is it possible to measure frustration? How frustrated must a person be to assume a revolutionary mentality?

More important, as has already been covered in the introduction, a theory, to be able to explain revolutionary transformation, has to incorporate in its definition the agents of social change. The J-curve model does not. Hence, we do not know which groups feel frustrated or which may be experiencing a sense of declining status, nor is it clear who might participate in political action. It is reasonable to argue that people may feel frustrated or satisfied at different times, a reality the J-curve model fails to explain. How is it possible, then, to say that, as

the theory maintains, the masses suddenly all together and at the same time explode into violence? This assertion is of questionable validity.

The relative deprivation model, like the J-curve, suffers from serious problems. In empirical tests, Gurr fails to operationalize relative deprivation. With Davies, he fails to make a connection between frustration and radicalization. How can frustration radicalize and politicize the affected individuals? How can the frustrated masses be mobilized into political action? Neither model answers these questions. Expectations, as a matter of fact, tend to be constantly frustrated. Yet this may not provoke violent action. Moreover, frustration may result in the development of apathy and new projections. Thus it is difficult to accept the idea that aggression always takes place in response to frustration. People may act aggressively even when there exists no evidence of prior frustration. Hence, the hypothesis of the relative deprivation model must be tested empirically. As was demonstrated in the Iranian case, the relative deprivation model fails to explain a revolutionary transformation.

Both models (the J-curve and RD) fail to distinguish between violent upheaval and true revolution. Neither approach says why similar causes lead to different conclusions. Both, in fact, fail to link causes to effects. Both ignore contradictions rooted in the prevailing political structures. Neither questions what causes deprivation or decline in socioeconomic status. Both fail to point out the structural or social determination of deprivation and unequal ownership. They do not question why allocation and distribution mechanisms always tend to favor those who do not work, but own everything and are biased against those who labor but

own nothing but their labor power. In sum, both help explain violence but not revolution.³

Structural functionalism does not improve on the psychological approaches. To begin with, functionalism is narrowly based. In one way or another, it attempts to continually adjust the various parts of the system. By repairing the parts, it attempts to make the whole functional. In this, then, it is conservative, for it tends to preserve the existing negative state of affairs. It tries, by virtue of its theoretical implication, to contain the revolution. In addition, functionalism fails to see that the political superstructure is a class concept. It attempts to preserve the existing dominant economic and class structures. To fulfill this function, it usually employs structural violence. Functionalism fails to comprehend the class character of the dominant order to whose preservation it is deeply committed. The social order that it advocates comprises inequality, exploitation, and unjust social relations. The dominant structures are based, historically and empirically, on racism, sexism, prejudice, discrimination, and, above all, class relations. Functionalism's vision of the dominant structures is very mechanistic and unscientific, for it sees them as impartial instruments working for the advancement of the general interests of all classes.⁴

The overall structural corruption of the state, as was shown in Iran, repudiates this erroneous perception of functionalism. Instead of preserving and promoting the common good for the general social interests, the ruling class aggressively stole the rights of the ruled, and became proud multimillionaires. In this light, it is extremely difficult to agree with functionalism that the ruling

structures, basically in the peripheries, tend to act for the preservation of general social interests. The theory's tendency to perpetuate the structures as such makes it a counterrevolutionary formulation simply because it is not possible, by ignoring class perspectives and contradictions anchored in state structures, to talk about revolution. This formulation, in fact, fails to explain historical change. It cannot account for the dialectical and historical rise and demise of social formations. Using the right mythology to explain a qualitative social change is a contradiction. Hence, functionalism is alien to the notions of contradiction and basic change.⁵

Furthermore, it is difficult to accept Johnson's view of functionalism, wherein any social system that is in a state of disequilibrium caused by dysfunctionism, if not repaired, is susceptible to revolution. This concept, as was demonstrated by empirical investigation of the Iranian case, does not hold up. In fact, since capitalist social formations are class institutions, they have never been equilibrated. Johnson's concepts simply cannot be empirically validated, nor can they be measured. For example, when does equilibrium start and when can it be said that a given formation is out of balance? How much disequilibrium, delegitimization, and disorientation is necessary for the occurrence of a revolution? The theory does not answer "why" questions such as these. Because functionalism is a conservative formulation, it is a mistake to apply it to a given formation for the purpose of explaining a basic structural transformation.

All three approaches deemphasize political factors. They totally ignore the fact that revolutions can be closely related in their causes and accomplishments to uneven capitalist accumulation, domination by imperial structures, and political

dependency and that structural contradictions can be major factors leading to the outbreak of revolution. Further, none of the approaches emphasize the importance of political struggle and all omit one of the most important components of revolution, the agents of social change--the political actors from below--thus leaving us confused as to what forces tend to mobilize political action against class institutions. Since all these theoretical formulations lack class focus, they fail to comprehend, or simply ignore, state-determined political struggles. Thus, they reduce the causes of social revolutions to psychological strains, deviation, and disorientation.⁶

The political conflict approach improves considerably on the aforementioned models. To begin with, it sets forth a basic counterargument that is quite convincing. It argues that no matter how psychologically frustrated and discontented people are, they cannot participate in political praxis unless they are related to an organized group with ample political resources at its disposal. In fact, Tilly introduces an important variable to the vocabulary of revolution, that is, organizationally determined mass mobilization, a view he shares with Trotsky and Lenin. In Trotsky's view, psychological variables employed by the approaches mentioned earlier do look very much like a steam engine without a piston: if the steam is not enclosed in a cylinder, it will be dissipated. The idea is not to deemphasize the potential of steam, but to argue that steam and piston are mutually reinforcing factors. Therefore, without having a political organization to contain and set in motion the steam of discontent, mass mobilization into a political movement is doomed to failure. The J-curve, RD, and structural functionalist

approaches fail to see that without a container the steam is gone; they cannot explain how grievances can be converted into militant street movement.⁷

Lenin also emphasizes the importance of vanguardism in class struggle. In his view, while accepting Marxian generalities, the trade union cannot lead to the development of class consciousness. If the working class is left to itself, it will develop only a "trade union consciousness"; that is to say, it will fight for wage increases and not for political ends. Therefore, revolutionary consciousness must be inculcated in workers from outside, that is, by a vanguard revolutionary party. Although adherence to the notion of organization or vanguardism may generate elitism and oppose the principles of dialectical materialism, class interest cannot be formulated without a program, and a program cannot be defended without a political organization. Class by itself is a raw material that needs to be converted into a political good. It is through political vanguard institutions that the proletarian class can be transferred from a class "in itself" to a political class "for itself." Hence, the political party is a historical tool by means of which the class acquires political awareness.⁸

Although Tilly's approach does not connote a radical leftism and has little to do with class struggle, it provides for organization-determined mass mobilization, which is more useful than the functionalism and psychological models. Whereas the conflict model provides for a political focus in studying revolution, the functional and psychological models lack this insight.

A further strength of the conflict approach lies in its critical and political vision of the state. While it sees the state as a model of organized "coercion"

attempting to support the position of "superordinate classes or groups" that dominate other groups, the functional and psychological formulations attempt to divert attention away from the primacy of political conflict. Indeed, they are very weak in their attention to political matters, hence, easily labelled as apolitical models.

Even though political conflict theory has many virtues (for example, its concentration on politically conflicting states of affairs, class alliances, social mobilization, and state-determined group conflicts), it nevertheless fails to explain revolutions in general and the Iranian Revolution in particular.⁹ One important theoretical defect is that Tilly's model also lacks class analysis. He simply picks up intergroup relations and analyzes them in "political terms." He does not study society in terms of political class conflict and domination. He is primarily concerned with interest-group competition, which reduces the study of revolution automatically to a kind of political violence. Furthermore, the most important variable of his approach is the development of multiple sovereignty. As we have already proven empirically, since capitalism penetrated to Iran, multiple sovereignty has been a constant. In prepolitical movements in Iran, or in all revolutions, this concept has been present. Indeed, this is a strength of the theory. However, the formulation, like functionalism and the psychological approach, fails to explain why a certain movement followed by certain causal variables culminates in a revolution, whereas similar contexts elsewhere do not.

In sum, though the political conflict model rejects the stresses, strains, and other psychological variables induced by modernization, and instead

concentrates on political factors, class alliances, coercive state power, and organizational-determined mass mobilization, it, too, ends up explaining the eruption of violence, but not revolution.¹⁰

The world historical context approach, the leading proponent of which is Theda Skocpol, is theoretically and empirically superior to the general theories of revolution. This approach concentrates on class conflict, structural perspectives, and comparative historical studies of the social revolutions. According to this formulation, the causes and processes of social revolutions cannot be explained in isolation from the international environment. It develops critical perspectives out of the contradictions of capitalist accumulation as pursued under its hegemony of world domination.

Skocpol introduces a sophisticated set of variables into the lexicon of social revolutions that are totally ignored by the general theories of revolution. Skocpolean concepts are in complete accord with the great social revolutions. Hence, her theory is validated by empirical analysis of the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions. While Skocpol analyzes the impact of intervening external variables on domestic context and attempts to locate the important causes of revolution in class conflict arising out of structural contradictions through the process of historical development within inherently conflict-bound social formations, general theories of revolution seek the causes of revolution in unsatisfied states of mind. Whereas Skocpolean theory involves the explanation of a basic transformation of sociopolitical and economic structures of society, the general theories' definition of revolution does not go beyond political violence.

Skocpol utilizes empirically verifiable variables, such as uneven development, the realities of transnational politics, class relations, structural contradictions, and political dependency as the heart of capital accumulation and as critical defining factors to explain social revolutions in modern times. The general theories of revolution have nothing to say in this respect. Being familiar with the inadequacy of these existing general theories, Skocpol not only tries to avoid the single-factor variables they employ, but also to do away with their defective general perceptions. Instead of trying to pursue a conservative or preservationist mode of thought, she develops a scholarly, history-bound, and state-centered theory. She explains how the existing formations are developed out of the structural contradictions in a class-divided mode of production or through a historical process. In conflict-ridden social formations, the function of the state, as she argues, has always been to contain class struggle. Hence, class conflict, in her view, constitutes the most important feature of a social revolution. General theories of revolution do not account for social revolution.¹¹

Yet despite the superiority of Skocpol's theory over the general theories, it, too, fails to explain the phenomenon of the Iranian Revolution. Its central claim is that, without the breakdown of repressive social control or the "incapacitation" of the dominant structures caused by international pressure and followed by a military defeat and peasant rebellion, no revolution can take place. As was empirically shown, the Shah was in firm control of a highly centralized, modern military institution and an extremely sophisticated and repressive secret police. He had not suffered a military defeat, nor was the international environment

hostile to him. In addition to repressive internal social control, he played the role of subimperialist eliminating alternative democratic forces both internally and regionally, for example, in Oman. Moreover, his political and military machinery was financed by petrodollars; hence, he did not need to extract surplus from the peasants. Yet, in spite of a highly centralized order, revolution took place. This defies Skocpol's theoretical expectation.

The advantages of the radical school of political thought become obvious when we compare it with general theories and with the world historical context model. Radical theory concentrates on socioeconomic contradictions, the negativity of class relations, uneven development, domination, and alienation. Skocpol shares some of these perspectives, yet alters some aspects of Marxian theory. With the occurrence of the Iranian Revolution, her revision of aspects of Marxism becomes inaccurate. It is extremely difficult to best Marxian critical perspectives on revolution. Faced by circumstances caused by the general crisis of capitalism, Skocpol does not return to Marxism for an explanation. If she had, she would have had no option but to argue for the strength of Marxism. Nonetheless, because this return also might have caused a contradiction, she attempts to seek the causes of the Iranian Revolution in rapid modernization, which undermines her theoretical formulation.

Moreover, the radical school of thought--contrary to the theories that interpret the parts in terms of the whole--analyzes them together. While the functionalist school assumes that by reforming the parts the whole is saved, the radical school convincingly argues that, as long as the whole is sick, curing the

parts does not make sense. In addition, it sees the existing social reality as the bearer of contradictions and negative class relations. Moreover, it aims at the elimination of the existing social relation of production (this perspective is shared by Skocpol), whereas the theoretical approaches tend to take the existing social reality as the embodiment of truth. They attempt to universalize it and thus to suppress history and its contradictions.¹²

The world historical context theory, unlike general theories of revolution, shares similar perspectives with radical political thought insofar as class conflict and the negation of the existing dominant order and structural contradictions are concerned. It differs from the radical school in that it sets forth a rather new theoretical perspective. For instance, contrary to the Marxist school of thought, which assigns class action to the proletarian class [to enter into a redefinition of the state as a class institution], Skocpol's conviction is that without incapacitation of coercive power accompanied by pressures from the international context causing military defeat, no revolution can take place. In addition, she emphasizes the role of the peasantry within the agrarian context in effecting a synthesis. Indeed, implicit in Skocpolean formulation is the notion that without the weakening of state power, class struggle will be useless. This is false. It, in fact, undermines Skocpol's theoretical commitment to historical analysis. Moreover, the "incapacitation" notion flies in the face of historical materialism. Although war, military competition, external pressures, and so on, are good defining variables and, although they can, by weakening the monopoly over the means of coercion,

accelerate class struggle, Skocpol's theoretical perspective is by no means better than Marxian formulation in explaining revolution.

Marxian theory is very consistent with regard to social revolutions. It, as opposed to the aforementioned theoretical approaches, has greater explanatory ability in informing revolutionary praxis. It is, in fact, a weapon in the hands of the forces from below.¹³ The most important theoretical virtue of the Marxian theory of revolution lies in its dialectical class analysis. This concept, that is, class, is a fundamental relational and analytical tool in explaining social revolution. It has the broadest comparative applicability. However, the comparative strength of Marxian theory is quite obvious. Whereas Marx concentrates on class struggle, sociopolitical contradictions (and this view is also stressed by Skocpol), and conflict between the forces and relations of production (unlike Skocpol), the general theories of revolution lack this insight, and ignore these fundamental social factors.

In actuality, general theories fail to realize that existing realities, being a product of history, are negative and that history helps explain, in a very important way, social transformation and political development. Because Marxian dialectical analysis is missing in the theoretical scheme of general theories, its practitioners assume that the existing conflict-ridden capitalistic formations are equilibrated, smoothly functioning, contradiction-free realities, formations somehow devoid of explosive structural problems or agents of revolution from below.¹⁴

Whereas general theories reflect a kind of bourgeois mind set, Marxism breaks with this type of mentality (and with Skocpol) by revolutionizing political

thought, and with the idea that the age of imperial domination, its peripheral class agents, and its dictatorial role are in perfect harmony with the will of the oppressed. The truth is that there is a strong link between capitalistic modes of production and the exploitation of the dominated classes. As long as this relationship persists and the peripheral modes tend to define their relationship to the metropolis in terms of conformity with capitalist logic, Marxism's applicability to class-divided social formations will prevail. Hence the Marxian concept of class relations anchored in control of the means of production and the appropriation of surplus by those who do not work but who own everything can be seen as a vigorous theoretical tool for the analytical study of revolution and as recognition of important social contradictions. Class relations are accompanied by sociopolitical conflicts that account for revolutionary change.

Despite these theoretical virtues, Marxism also suffers from certain shortcomings. For one thing, the role assigned to the interaction between base and superstructure is to some extent methodologically and conceptually confusing. In C. Wright Mills' words, we do not know "what is included and what is not included in 'economic base' . . . nor are the 'forces' and 'relations' of production precisely defined and consistently used." It is, according to Mills', problematic to figure out what is meant by superstructure. Moreover, the role of economics in determining class struggle is overstressed.¹⁵ For instance, George Lukacs, in History and Class Consciousness, argues that class struggle is determined by political considerations; hence, struggle over economic categories is not a class struggle at all. Social classes can fight class struggle by developing for themselves

a political ideology and a vanguard institution. In the absence of a political concept, economism is doomed to failure.¹⁶

Marxist thinkers as a whole seem to go from contradiction to contradiction. On the one hand, as they correctly argue, capitalism is a contradictory mode of production and cannot lead to the realization of the democratic rights of men, for democracy and capitalism are incompatible. On the other hand, they seem to argue that an antiimperialist coalition mobilized by local capital and petite bourgeoisie can result in the development of full capitalism in Third World formations. In a way, then, this school of thought tends unequivocally to defend the interests of the domestic national bourgeoisie. This class, though, may be revolutionary and progressive; its anti-imperialism does not necessarily mean anticapital. This local bourgeoisie, to satisfy its own economic and political aspirations, would either block the basic revolutionary transformation or would pursue conservative tendencies in postrevolutionary epochal development. This type of analysis is not problem-free.¹⁷

Despite these defects, however, Marxist political thought has greater explanatory capacity. In this context, Skocpol's B variables (see figure 2 in Introduction, p. 9), the Marxian concept of class, Lenin and Trotsky's notion of party organization, Luxemburg's insightful theoretical attributes of radicalism, all constitute critical defining factors. These indicators are historically and empirically validated. Hence, the social theory of revolutionary change must incorporate these variables into its construction. For these reasons, critical theories are highly superior to general theories of revolution. But, these categories, too, fail to explain

the Iranian Revolution insofar as its religious and sociocultural dimensions are concerned. It is in the light of this failure that I attempt to formulate a new perspective.

2. TOWARD A GENERAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Revolution in Third World formations seeks liberation from domination. The externalization of the contradictions of capitalism has culminated in political struggle between the class institutions installed by the imperial centers and social forces in the dominated formations. Revolution in Third World formations must thus be sought in the internal contradictions of global capitalistic formations and of internal social forces. The integration of peripheries into world capitalism gives rise to class conflict and creates new social forces. These forces cannot be defined as external to the system of capitalism. They are, in fact, an important part of capitalism's globalized exploitative social relations. This mode of production, that is capitalism, is contradictory because capital accumulation in peripheries involves inequality and promotes unjust social relations. While the dominant class is benefited by capital accumulation, the masses are left behind. The perception of inequality is sharpened by social differentiation. The excluded forces or those who do not benefit in accordance with their work tend to participate in antagonistic political action. The relationship between capital and the oppressed forces is thus contradictory and the contradictory cannot be resolved without a political transition to a higher stage of development. This means emancipation from domination. While the center attempts to maintain existing relationships, basically

domination, the oppressed are determined to reshape, redefine, and abolish that particular relationship.¹⁸

The expansion of capital to the peripheries thus creates dependent political development in which benefits are distributed unequally. It leads to further uneven development on a massive, obstructive scale. This type of contradictory development destroys local and regional self-sufficiency. It also undermines the cultural and traditional base of societal security. Actually, the class character of social formations, especially proletarianization, expropriation of the peasant class, explosive urbanization and with these processes the rapid expansion of alienation and marginalization of social forces, such as, unemployed reserve army and shanty-dwellers are determined by capital accumulation through the process of uneven or unequal development and are reinforced by the political dependency of the existing dominated structures. It follows that the activating motive of capitalism behind its expansion to peripheries and its active search for markets is obviously the result of internal contradictions, for instance, the class struggle. In reality, the capitalistic mode of production does not recognize anything but "one law:" the extraction of surplus value motivated primarily by profit maximization. In order to achieve this objective, capitalism has to expand itself to peripheries integrating them into the world capitalistic order. But in pursuit of this goal, it is confronted by the resistance of the dominated forces subordinated to the exploitative social relations of dominant imperial centers.¹⁹

Attempts at integration of peripheral social formations into the capitalist system instigates conflict which, in turn, creates or unleashes new social forces.

These structurally released forces demand economic participation and political accommodation and produces radical transition to a higher mode of thought through a dialectical formation of synthesis. The conviction of these social classes, based on historical evidence, is that without a radical and fundamental transformation of a dominated formation's social and political structures, their emancipation and free development cannot be realized. A radical political tendency, as such, is in sharp conflict with the ruling ideas or the vested interests. While these oppressed forces attempt to abolish the existing exploitative and dependent relationships, the class in domination tends to preserve them. In addition, the latter cannot, by virtue of the outdated superstructures, contain the forces released by the process of capital accumulation. Hence, under the externally supported internal structures (that is, the dominated dependent social formations), the realization of the democratic rights of these forces cannot be achieved; for these anachronistic structures headed by comprador bourgeoisie, chosen and supported by oligarchies in the centers, cannot broaden their sociopolitical bases. They are contradiction-ridden because they tend to preserve the existing relations and expand the exploitation of the oppressed classes. Thus, the social function and social natures of these structures are negative and contradictory. True, these political superstructures also deliver social services, but they are designed to perpetuate political domination and to ensure the continuity of capital accumulation and further a consented exploitation process. These structures, therefore, cannot play an active role in the mass-incorporating process or democratization of a given social formation.²⁰

To be sure, the existing state of affairs in peripheries is negative and capital accumulation in these formations is contradictory. This is simply because capitalism breeds unequal development and exploitative social relations. Furthermore, it leads to the destruction of small business and traditional cultural and societal norms. It destroys (within the periphery) the present without creating a future. The social forces are excluded from growing economic wealth. Therefore, those who are converted into the reserve army of the unemployed, those who produce but own nothing, those whose cultural values are subjected to destruction by capital accumulation, rise up to usher in an era of liberation..²¹

The internationalization of the capitalistic mode of production creates further sociopolitical problems. It not only intensifies class conflict, it also subordinates the economic, political, and educational capability of the dominated formations to the value relations of the centers.²² The conflict between center and periphery values constitutes an additional contradiction which as a discontent-inducing variable reinforces the prevalent contradictory state of affairs. More importantly, dependent capital accumulation, which is the direct result of the internationalization of capital and its inherent internal contradictions, generates further discontent and political contradictions. It breeds class antagonism, fuels the forces of nationalism, and inflames the sociopolitical feelings of dominated and oppressed forces of these social formations in the peripheries.²³

In order to cope with the rising tides of opposition, the intervening support variable is absolutely essential, for in the absence of or due to a failure to strengthen the alienated autocratic political superstructures in dominated Third

World formations, they cannot withstand the political struggle of the social forces from below. That is why political repression and structural violence have to be employed to maintain the system in domination and to eliminate the class definition of the society. In reality, without repressing the democratic aspirations of social forces, and without capital accumulation based on the extraction of surplus value, profit maximization would be impossible. And without imposition of this process of exploitation and domination on the peripheries, the capitalist system at the center would cease to have continuity. The general conclusion, therefore, is that capitalism and democratic ideas are incompatible. No wonder then that rights are violated, lives are lost, and political execution is the dominant feature of authoritarianism in Third World formations. There exists no outlet for unsanctioned political thought. In fact, repression of ideas and classes, in order to satisfy the political, economic, and above all, whimsical ambitions of ruling elites both in center and peripheries, is a profound contradiction arising out of capital accumulation in peripheries. Moreover, the support of oligarchism to authoritarianism in the dominated formations in a disguised form, defined as delivery of democracy, is indeed an explosive contradiction which genuinely contributes to the aggravation of the prevailing negativity of the existing social reality.²⁴

But it should be emphasized that external support for the status quo and authoritarianism sharpens the prevailing contradictions and triggers revolutionary political consciousness. The radicalized and politicized forces soon realize that full utilization of economic and political potentialities, minimization of socioclass

conflict, and expansion of bills of rights, especially liberation from sociopolitical and economic domination under the existing mode of production, cannot be realized. It is in the face of such realization that the intervening variable assumes the following social functions:

- 1) to institute a highly developed, systemic, counterrevolutionary organization throughout the world, either directly or indirectly through puppet authoritarianism;
- 2) to prevent revolutionary transformation;
- 3) whenever there is a conflict (which there always is) between the few ruling comprador cliques and the masses, it always sides with the former at the expense of the exclusion, alienation, and repression of the latter.

And, most important,

- 4) to eliminate the alternative democratic forces to maintain a static mode of production suppressing history and fundamental social change. To be sure, in the absence of counterrevolutionary measures as such, the internal contradictions of capital in the oligarchic metropolis cannot be counteracted, nor can profit maximization be attempted. It is in this spirit that capital seeks alliance with authoritarian politics acting against popular democratic mass demand.²⁵

It is in light of the metropolis' counterrevolutionary strategy that excluded, exploited, and oppressed masses participate in the redefinition of existing dominated formations within the peripheral context. Moreover, it is quite conceivable that as long as the existing relationships are sustained by the status-quo oriented conservative political elite in the metropolis, the revolutionary political

struggle, will, indeed, be transformed into international class struggle between the oppressed and exploited classes in the peripheries and counterrevolutionary forces of the imperial agents in these imperialized formations.²⁶

If the process of support for antidemocratic and counterrevolutionary authoritarianism continues, as with current revolutions it seems to be intensified, the upsurge of further radicalization and revolutionary thoughts in Third World formations will be heightened. In addition, the creation of anti-imperialist forces along with the occurrence of more revolutionary movements in peripheries will be inevitable. This may lead to the incapacitation of counterrevolutionary centers which, in turn, can accelerate liberation movements in the peripheries. But, these revolutions may not culminate, by virtue of the still stronger counterrevolutionary institutions imposed upon them, in full emancipation. Nonetheless, the occurrence of revolution within the Third World context can weaken the monopoly power of the center and consequently invoke political awareness in the passive masses. Hence, the breakdown of the hegemony of advanced capitalism may well mean a transition to a higher stage of development in the center. If this does not happen, the emancipation of man and his democratic ideals may not be fully realized.²⁷

However, it can be safely stated that the main causes of revolution in the modern era are uneven and combined development, political dependency, the alienated nature of state-centered politics, and, most importantly, class conflict. Thus, revolutions arise out of the class nature of the center/peripheral formations and the contradictions rooted in their structures. Because the peripheries are the

weak link in the chain of the imperial mode of domination, they tend to shatter during political struggle.²⁸

The basic question is how these contradictions are translated into political action. Class struggle cannot take place in a vacuum. In the Marxian view, social existence determines political consciousness, which, in turn, mobilizes the working class into revolutionary movement. It is probably by virtue of mass consumerism and a relative degree of improvement in socioeconomic conditions of the proletarian class in the centers that it has assumed a degree of passivity at least so far as the political realm is concerned. The reason for this has to be sought in the expansion of the center's politicoeconomic contradiction to peripheries, and "internal and external neo-colonization." This policy of domination has led, to some extent, to profit gains and the enlargement of internal and external markets which counteract the tendential fall of the profit rate. This, in turn, provides a better standard of living for the workers in the center. But this does not necessarily mean that the working class is not a revolutionary class. It is. As long as labor forms the foundation of production, the working class will remain a political force.²⁹

Nonetheless, the class struggle as mentioned earlier is international, involving the liberation movements in the periphery and imperial agents and, through them, conservative forces in the metropolis who attempt to sustain the antidemocratic structures of exploitation. It should, however, be borne in mind that, in Third World formations, though the existence of the working class has deteriorated and hence is an indication of its political conscience, that existence

alone cannot initiate a dialectical synthesis-formation in a political antithesis struggle. Its alliance with other forces is absolutely necessary. For example, no one can rule out the importance of radicalized, politicized, and alienated middle-class intelligentsia. This class is mostly alienated from its mental labor. Intellectuals are exploited, too. They contribute to the reproduction of the capitalist system and create surplus value.³⁰ The rebellious middle-class in the Third World no longer identifies itself with the prevailing mode of production and thought. Therefore, a social theory of change must incorporate into its analytical framework new voices from below. The militant middle-class, as a new "below," thus cannot be excluded from the alliance or collective solidarity of oppressed forces. In reality, the revolution in Third World formations seeks simultaneous emancipation from internal absolutism, exploitative social relations, and imperial domination. In order to accomplish these emancipatory goals, it is absolutely necessary to look for revolutionary consciousness beyond the laboring class, for this class, by virtue of its small size, cannot, without alliance with politically conscious forces--the middle-class intelligentsia and peasants, whose potential for revolution has already been empirically proven--initiate political action for inauguration of an epochal social revolution. Hence, students, intellectuals, peasants, a new generation of laborers, and slum dwellers, in addition to the working class, must be infused with the theoretical scheme of this new "below" formation. Without progressive class solidarity anchored in the vanguard of the revolution, it is extremely difficult to defeat the machinery of state-sponsored, externally supported, counterrevolutionary terror.³¹

Moreover, the emphasis on the culture of the oppressed forces may provide new methodological insights into revolutionary change. Existing political structures, it can be argued more forcefully, have effectively contributed to the total alienation of man. Under such conditions and a domination/subordination relationship, religion, which is the culture and ideology of the oppressed poor, may play two roles; it may either legitimize passivity in the face of rising tides of political discontent, or it may assume the role of political liberation theology. If this trend of thought chooses the former option, it will automatically lose its mass-based support and become part of the structural violence and thus alienate itself. Hence, it has no alternative but to adopt the latter position. This radical faction was highly visible in Nicaragua and played a dominant role in the class coalition and mass mobilization in Iran. In reality, its radicalism led to a united class solidarity that marked the dawn of revolution in these countries.³²

However, it should be emphasized that a fundamental sociopolitical structural transformation and traditional religion are incompatible. For religion is inherently conservative (though Shi'ism, given its radicalism, is an exception to this role, as demonstrated in the context of this research, it played a crucial, radical, and political role in the breakdown of the Pahlavi regime). In a post revolutionary era, it may apply restrictions on basic transformation which is a dominant feature of a revolution as being a radical concept. The emerging mode of production thus may be a replica of what contradicted. In other words, it may not differ from its comprador predecessor. Nonetheless, this new category, the culture of the oppressed, must be carefully considered in theorizing.³³ Hence, the basic

conviction of this thesis is that, without the oppressed poor or the direct producers to control the means of production, the synthesis affected would be no more than a political revolution. That is why I tend to believe that without the transition of the metropolis to the higher stages of development, social justice, emancipation, and human rights can not be fully attempted. Nevertheless, this particular perspective, which depends on historical, political, socioeconomic, and structural conditions of different social formations does have the potential to explain the occurrence of revolutions. And the Iranian Revolution provides empirical data to prove its validity.³⁴

In reality, the history of Iran, since the penetration of the capitalistic mode of production into the country, has been a history of political struggle against external domination and internal oppression. Thus, the critical variables that attributed to the politicization of the Iranian masses and fueled the revolution were a desire for freedom from domination, exploitation, and despotism. The state in Iran was an alienated institution. It was supported mainly by the security forces. It thus sustained itself through a built-in commitment to structural violence.³⁵ It, in fact, lacked a social basis which is crucial to the survival of any political system. In addition, its political dependency on the metropolis created explosive contradictions. It fed political activism in Iran. This policy was followed by political immunity for all U.S. servicemen and their families. The concept of capitulation came to be an explosive variable in the Iranian Revolution. Moreover, the Pahlavi dynasty was considered as an illegitimate system, because it was the

end result of interventionism from the metropolis. Both father and son had come to power through military coups engineered and supported by external forces.³⁶

The emergence of an authoritarian dictatorship in Iran was not an isolated phenomenon, however. It was the result of structural crisis rooted in the capitalist world economy. Given Iran's integration into capitalistic formations and its dependence on the bourgeoisie class in metropolitan areas for technological and political development and supply of goods, local structures were reinforced by the external structures of domination. It was, for instance, the centers, basically the United States, that trained and armed the Shah's regime and provided him with sophisticated knowledge of coercive social controls needed for capital accumulation, extraction of surplus value, and profit maximization. Hence, the basic function of the dependent prerevolutionary state in Iran was to protect and promote the class interests of the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the rising internally based comprador class, and to prevent the radicalization of the oppressed classes.³⁷

As mentioned earlier, the Iranian state was a dependent one, the defense and survival of which did not depend on legitimate rights or the consent of the ruled. Its continuity was contingent on external support as well as on the utilization of controlled repression. In order to perpetuate the usurped power and create a stable order, the system had no alternative but to increasingly resort to systematic terror and structural violence. It thus did not hesitate to annihilate politically conscious democratic forces, demobilize political persuasions and suppress all democratic ideals and social rights. It was more urgent to forcefully disguise the class definition of the society. Because the class that was in

domination did not have a popular mass base to lend legitimate support to its rule, the ruling class in Iran, therefore, depended for support on the security forces armed and trained by its metropolitan class allies.³⁸

Knowing that sheer exertion of forced control was not a viable means to shore up the order, the dependent state of Iran generated a legitimization-breeding intermediary means: development or reform from above. Yet the reform programs created more contradiction than solution to the problems of the dependent state. Therefore, the solution itself became a fundamental problem. It led to a highly uneven and exploitative development. Inequality reigned supreme, social antagonism prevailed, and corruption formed the dominant feature of the regime. Hence, social mobilization culminated in mass alienation, further domination, and exploitation rather than social integration, accommodation, and legitimization.³⁹

Nevertheless, speaking in terms of developmentalism, it was the petrodollars which kept the system functioning. Here, an important point has to be made. No matter how profitable or creative the oil production and petrodollars earned were, they had little to do with domestic production. In other words, its impact on the development of the domestic economy was not great. Industrialization in most non-oil producing Third World formations involves extraction and appropriation of surplus value from agricultural production. The surplus derived from agricultural development enables those formations to finance industrial imports and the process of industrialization. In the Iranian case, the reverse was true. Oil money financed not only industrialization, but also food imports. Agricultural development was stagnated because most of the revenues

from oil were spent on imports of consumption goods. Oil money mostly subsidized huge service sectors leading to the stagnation of other productive sectors of the economy.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the class character of the prerevolutionary dependent state, along with contradictions anchored in its anachronistic structures, made great contributions to the outbreak of revolution in Iran. The dependent state, by virtue of its integration into a capitalistic metropolis, created unprecedented uneven and unequal development. For instance, north and south Tehran were completely different. Whereas the former looked very much like a highly developed capitalist formation, the latter suffered severely from a lack of social services. In fact, the relation between north and south Tehran was similar to the relation of metropolis versus peripheral formations. The same differences and unevennesses were evident between Tehran and provincial cities, provinces/cities/villages, and rural/urban areas. The middle-class, the lower classes, and the laboring class suffered severely from the consequences of the politics of uneven development, domination, repression, and exploitation.⁴¹

The following argument by the distinguished Middle Eastern expert Fred Halliday further supports the analysis under consideration. He rightly emphasizes the importance of external linkage variables and the significant contribution which they made to the occurrence of the Iranian revolution. For Halliday,

The whole context in which the upheaval occurred was one of socioeconomic transformations under which Iran was increasingly integrated into the world market and exposed to the economic, social, and cultural influences of the West. The rate

of Iran's oil output--over six million barrels a day--was dictated not by a rational calculation of what revenues Iran could most effectively absorb but by the demands of other countries for greater supply. The political and military buildup of the Shah's regime was made as a result of strategic decisions made in Washington.⁴²

Here, the key operative concepts are "integration" which led to the domination of the country by imperial centers, and "strategic political and military build up" determined by Washington, the counterrevolutionary base.⁴³ This kind of political dependency is not an isolated episode. It is the integral dynamism of the global expansion of capitalism. It kills any rights whatsoever to self-determination. Therefore, the externally generated oppressive internal structures are contradictory and crisis bound. "The crisis," in Gramsci's words, "consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appears."⁴⁴ In order to preserve the "dying" oppressive structures, the centers provide for capital accumulation (modernization) through repressive social control. However, it should be noted that this decision is not based on choice. It is caused by the threat of upheavals from below which could well lead to a breakdown of capitalistic order. But the proposed solution is devoid of any meaningful content. It does not have any value. It creates more problems than it resolves. It leads to the destruction of a highly valued institutionalized culture, dislocation, and proletarianization. It is simply because capital accumulation benefits a few capitalistic forces.⁴⁵

In Iran, for example, in 1978, approximately two million Iranians used to live in shanty towns in the southern part of Tehran. The Shah's so-called White

Revolution from above led to the intensification of class relations. The land reform, on the one hand, created a small rural petite bourgeoisie, and on the other hand, it proletarianized a large number of the peasantry. The old land owners were compensated handsomely. They were elevated to urban bourgeoisie status. In the meantime, they retained some of their property in land. They were making millions in the business of housing projects. In fact, class stratification in Iran created a small landed peasantry class and an urban bourgeoisie (mostly old land owners) who became the class allies of the system. At the same time it gave rise to the creation of a large number of landless and propertyless barefooted laborers who possessed nothing but their labor power. Because there was a vast uneven and unequal developmental gap between urban/rural areas, the forces who had nothing to sell but their labor power migrated to big provincial cities, especially Tehran. A new wage-laboring class thus emerged, reinforcing the political strategy of urban opposition.⁴⁶

Furthermore, since petrodollars were to be repatriated to the centers, the dependent state of Iran generously injected the oil money into Western goods, creating a huge service sector at the cost of productive investment and creative development. Petrodollars were acquired by the increase of oil prices, which was encouraged by the United States. Since U.S. finished goods were more expensive than comparable goods from the Western European countries and Japan, the American elites decided to increase oil prices for two reasons. First, the United States imported only ten percent of its oil from the Middle East, whereas its Western allies and Japan depended on the oil from these countries. To pay the high

costs of energy, they had no alternative but to increase the price of their goods. This was to place the United States in a comparative advantage, to give it a more competitive position, and second, to enhance the purchasing capabilities of the Middle Eastern societies.⁴⁷ This created insurmountable problems: rampant inflation, income inequality, weak industry, and lack of productivity. In a sense, the system diverted the oil money from productive investment to consumerism. The use-up policy, pursued by the metropolitan elitism, forced the dependent state of the Shah to buy and consume, thereby eliminating oil's contribution to long-run development. In addition, it created infrastructural problems. Because the system was not able to handle the imported goods, they were mostly decayed in the docks, leading to further waste of resources and discontent.⁴⁸

More importantly, the oil boom generated incredible corruption. The class at the top was making billions, actually not from productive investment but from stealing from the common good. This rich class lived a luxurious life in northern Tehran. The lifestyle of this class was similar to its counterpart in the Western oligarchies. They opened numerous savings accounts in Western banks. While in the early 1970s there was an acute shortage of housing, some billionaires in the top category bought over 100,000 houses abroad. The flight of capital in the 1970s was believed to be in the billions. For instance, in 1977 alone, the money taken out by a very few ruling class members was estimated to be \$4.3 billions. The class character of the system could be easily observed in the developmental patterns of Tehran alone, whose millions lived in shanties in the southern part of the city without social services. For instance, most people, at the peak of the

Shah's modernization programs and at the time of Iran's 1.5 billion dollars income from oil in a month, lacked piped water and electricity. Middle class and working class also suffered severely from the shortage of housing. Almost seventy percent of their income was swallowed by rent. Added to this problem was the doubling of the population of major provincial cities in less than ten years. The generation of barefooted immigrants, in fact, intensified the class antagonism. These forces, which consisted of over half of the rural peasantry, were disoriented wage laborers. They had no job security nor did they have adequate housing. Their social function was to enrich apartment owners. Because most of their income, as mentioned earlier, was spent on rent, this was actually an additional burden to the severe exploitation launched by the owners of the means of production. The growing impoverishment, in fact, antagonized this class, compelling them to seek solution in radicalization and political action.⁴⁹

The Iranian contradiction-ridden dependent political structures further alienated other social forces. The progressive radical elements of the Shi'i mode of thinking, the intellectuals, students, professional middle-class, and the working class as a whole, had been circled by the constant execution of applied repression or encroachment by the secret police. Political expressions were banned, minds censored, and demands suppressed. While these forces demanded freedom from domination, salvation from cultural imperialism, and independent development, the fossilized state forcefully circumscribed those demands brought to bear upon it. The professional middle class (authors, lawyers, journalists, university professors, poets, doctors, judges) were denied independent judgment. They were the victims

of censorship and forced subordination. That is why this class, as a protest to oppression and domination, embarked on an active political opposition to the dependent state. University students, too, being aware of the fact that higher education was empty of qualitative content and its important function tended to be myth-making and the inducement of superficial thinking, opposed the system. Moreover, they were perfectly aware that the existing educational systems were designed to preserve the externally-generated oppressive structures rather than provide for societal needs, analytical reasoning, and political comprehension. In addition, higher education lacked the capacity to absorb all high school students. On the whole, the Iranian educational system was not adequate to meet the needs of the country.⁵⁰ According to Fred Halliday "in the late 1950s it was producing as many university graduates as Japan a century before, and as the output of higher education has increased so the quality has fallen. Iran still suffers from over 50 percent illiteracy--higher than India--and this too must have a major...effect on the overall efficiency of the workforce."⁵¹ It is thus easy to realize the causes of student radicalism in Iran.

Moreover, the structurally determined uneven development further antagonized class relations. The state-supported comprador bourgeoisie gained political and economic strength effectively challenging the socioeconomic power of the bazaris. The emergence of modern banking systems and the corporate domination of the Iranian sociopolitical and economic spheres by the center posed a serious threat to the very being of bazaris. This group did not have any option; they could either fight or be crushed. The intention of the corporate-led dependent

state to demolish the bazaris came to be very obvious when the system launched a frontal assault on the bazaris. Thousands of bazaris were prosecuted, many were either imprisoned or exiled. When this contradictory mode of thought coincided with the state's direct attack on the ulama, the traditional ally of the bazar merchants, the revolutionary class alliance was in the making.⁵²

The laboring class was also in opposition to the existing mode of thinking; exploitative social relations of production and structural violence. The labor unions were dominated by the secret police and informing agents. Union busting, strike breaking, physical oppression, and crushing the workers' aspiration for free unionization formed the basis of the daily business of working places. In a way, the unions were run like military barracks. In addition to secret political control, "security bureaus," which constituted the arms of the SAVAK institution, had been directly instituted within the factories. The laboring class, like other social forces, challenged the regime on both political and economic grounds.⁵³

However, the entrance of the working class into political revolutionary class alliance made a strategic contribution to the occurrence of the revolution. The effective political strikes by the working class, especially those in the oil fields crippled the Shah's dependent state. It not only brought to a halt all economic wheels, it also destroyed the source of revenue (oil) on which the oppressive dependent state structures rested. It can be claimed that the living contradiction was between the state in domination and the oppressed forces. In reality, all of these forces wanted to break down the existing state machinery, without annihilation of which, emancipation from domination was impossible.⁵⁴

It can be safely argued that Iran, under the Shah, was a dominated social formation which came about through its integration with the capitalistic metropolitan areas and the process of capital accumulation. This, in turn, led to the emergence of an authoritarian dependent state whose survival was conditioned by external imperial support. Local structures of oppression were reinforced by the centers in domination. The creation of a repressive political superstructure in Iran was indeed the result of structural contradictions of world capitalism. Without an organized state power, it was not possible for the centers to maintain class rule and exploitation, nor could it afford to contain revolutionary transformation of political relations in favor of the oppressed and exploited. It was basically for this reason that contradiction between the state and the Iranian people was real. It, in fact, had created incredible political alienation. The state had no legitimate base in the Iranian society. The people and the state were two estranged and hostile forces confronting each other.

Empirical investigation supports the conclusion that a dependent state, detached from the people, cannot survive political class struggle. Repressive social control, which was clearly the result of political bankruptcy of the system, further antagonized social forces, alienating the state from the people. And a state cut off from the people may have no option but to cease to exist. This is what happened in Iran. The Iranian Revolution was caused by structural contradictions and internal sociopolitical strains. The most important contradiction was between the people and the political superstructure and, through it, foreign domination and the ruling capitalistic classes in the metropolis. Moreover, political dependency, the

conditions of exploitation, domination, class antagonism, the exclusion of the ruled from political and economic participation, local cultural destruction, cultural and military imperialism, the conversion of the Iranian social formation into a consumerist society, are factors which clearly explain why the revolution took place in Iran. In addition, the Revolution developed out of uneven and unequal development of imperial capital accumulation, which imposed its contradictions on the anachronistic superstructure of the country that exceeded the accommodative capacity of its ruling class. It was thus the product of the law of uneven development. This law antagonized the class-induced contradictions that shattered Iran, the "weakest link" in the imperial metropolis chain. Iran, therefore, was another developing capitalist formation that paid for the bankruptcy of capital struggling to make itself a universally ordained and consented mode of production while denying its potentially explosive inherent contradictions.⁵⁵

It follows that the domination variable was a crucial defining factor in the Iranian Revolution. And the impetus to this upheaval was to overthrow the imperial rule. If we accept the argument that contradiction constitutes the heart of developmentalism and change, then the major causes of revolutions in general and the Iranian Revolution in particular have to be sought in contradictions. Social formations, therefore, contain the seeds of their own destruction. This is an indisputable fact. Hence, by virtue of historical development, contradictions are the motive force of transformations. In fact, it is not difficult to observe contradictory factors within social formations. For instance, without poor, there can be no rich; without oppressed, no oppressor. It is equally true that without the imperial

domination of the peripheries, there can be no imperialized formations. Nonetheless, it is within a given condition of imperial domination that the structurally generated convulsive stresses and strains or contradictions are exploded in revolutionary upheavals, cancelling each other out.⁵⁶

In actuality, the internally developed objective conditions existed in the Iranian social formation prior to the revolution. What was really needed was a subjective cause to mobilize discontented forces into social conflict. The actors from below or opposing social forces in contradiction with the externally supported political structures in domination were the forces united in a broadly based revolutionary class alliance. Yet, the revolution was led and organized by the progressive and radical wing of Shi'i political thought which have, in the past hundred years, played a crucial role in the popular movements against despotism and domination. Hence, the critical subjective force which acted upon the existing objective dynamism to realize and organize the alliance in greater collective revolutionary mobility, was the organizational leadership provided by Imam Khomeini. Without his organizational skill the objective condition generated by structural contradictions could have dissipated into vanity and become fragmented.⁵⁷

In sum, the general conclusion which can be derived from this analysis is that any theoretical formulation that fails to incorporate into its framework the critical defining variables introduced by this study will end up with confusion and not explanation. The truth is that in the modern age one cannot exclude the international linkage variables. Explaining social revolutions without an emphasis

on their external causes will be no more than an intellectual exercise in futility. Hence, it would be appropriate to consider Skocpol's B variables in theory formulation. It is also important to concentrate on objective conditions and subjective causes of revolutions. Moreover, structural contradictions, the conflict of opposites, and the culture of the oppressed must be stressed. Instead of generalized concentration on a single dimensional variable, the politics of global dependency, class relations, the social and political structures of Third World formations, their manner of uneven and unequal development, exploitative social relations of production, who controls the production at whose cost and for whom, have to occupy the heart of a social theory of revolution. In addition, one should look to the nexus of state-centered politics. In this case, although a rupture in the political power structure at the top may weaken the state, leading to successful political struggle from below, the reverse of it is also true. That is to say, since the very existence of the state is a sign of class rule and the manifestation of an irreconcilable conflict of interests, it is a contradictory phenomena. It causes more contradictions than it resolves. Hence, an oppressive state-centered political climate itself can be a critical catalyst of a revolution. More importantly, tactical revolutionary class alliances should be given greater weight in theory building. In short, without considering these factors, the formulation of a general theory of revolution will be a total failure, nor will the explanation of a revolution be possible.⁵⁸ Seen in this light, can we define the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979 as a social revolution that involves a fundamental transformation of a society's sociopolitical structures?

3. SUMMARY

It can be safely argued that the Iranian Revolution is, in fact, in full conformity with Skocpol's definition and, therefore, as she sees it, is a true social revolution, similar to the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions. According to her, it is to the point to call the Iranian Revolution a social revolution. She argues that "the Iranian Revolution has been so obviously mass-based and so thoroughly transformative of basic sociocultural and socioeconomic relationships in Iran that it surely fits more closely the pattern of the great historical social revolutions than it does the rubric of simply a political revolution, where only governmental institutions are transformed."⁵⁹

But this formulation is rather problematic because Skocpol also defines revolution in terms of outcome. Can it be claimed that the Iranian Revolution accomplished objectives like those of the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions? For instance, did it alter class and economic structures, social relations of production or political dependence? Moreover, one of the most fundamental revolutionary outcomes of a social revolution, as she argues, is the mass-accommodating capacity of the state in a post revolutionary era,⁶⁰ or victory over intensified prerevolutionary alienation. As mentioned throughout this research, alienation is produced by structural determination. When revolution alters class structure, massive alienation is also supposed to be eliminated. Did this occur in Iran? No. No new potential was generated to ease the dependence on a

single economic factor--oil. Oil still constitutes 98.5 percent of the country's exports.⁶¹

Further, the revolution, though dominated by the political ideas of the dispossessed or disinherited class, has not altered the socioeconomic status of that class. It did not abolish ownership in the means of production, nor did it transfer the country's socioeconomic structures. This state of affairs does not conform to the outcome of the social revolutions studied by Skocpol. Nonetheless, it should be noted that it is a mistake to define revolution purely in terms of outcomes, "whoever expects a 'pure' Social Revolution," Lenin maintained, "will never live to see it."⁶²

Various intellectuals have studied the Iranian Revolution. According to one, Homa Katouzian, Iran's 1978-1979 Revolution was no more than a political reform. In sharp contrast to Skocpol, who classifies the Iranian Revolution in the same category with the great social revolutions, Katouzian's conviction is that to see it "as yet another French Revolution" is a mistake. He compares it with the constitutional movement and sees the former as "a perfect replica" of the latter. But, as we know, the constitutional movement changed only the state structure without breaking down the monarchy. The Revolution of 1978-1979 culminated in a radical replacement of the imperial ruling class by a cleric class and the alteration of the centuries-old dynasty into an Islamic Republic. Even though this revolution appears not to have matched the achievements of the great social revolutions, it does not seem to be a "replica" of the constitutional movement.⁶³

There may be some similarities between the two but the concept "replica" cannot be justified. If the constitutional movement was triggered by despotism and colonial intrigues, so was the 1978-1979 Revolution. Both movements were a political reaction to foreign domination and internal repression. Yet despotism and imperial domination constituted only two defining variables. In the 1978-1979 Revolution, other variables played critical roles as well. It was truly an uprising activated by sociopolitical and economic contradictions. In addition to the class feature of the revolution, it opposed dependent development. This sharp contradiction, along with the class character of the superstructure, uneven development, the denial of political rights, suppression of the forces of production, and conflict with the dominant reality, activated the Revolution. These are factors that do not appear to be initiating elements in the constitutional movement. Further, theoretically speaking, the constitutional movement cannot be termed a revolution because it did not correspond to the classification of social revolutions. Hence, it would be a theoretical fallacy if the two analytically different movements were classified into a single category.

The Iranian Revolution meets the definitional prerequisite of a social revolution. However, it failed to transform social structure. It was truly a mass-based movement inspired by the liberation of the oppressed classes from the shackles of an externally supported class rule and exploitation. This political revolution, with a degree of social spirit, has not yet materialized into a full-fledged social revolution. It has altered a centuries-old monarchical regime into a republic, eradicated the Western-inspired Pahlavi culture, and overthrown the ruling class, all

of which are characteristics of social revolution. Yet its failure to abolish ownership in the means of production, transform socioeconomic relations, and, more importantly, alter the political structures of social control and create a mass-incorporating institution, bind it to political revolution, but a revolution enjoying a "social soul." "Whether the idea of a social revolution," writes Marx, "with a political soul is paraphrase or nonsense, there is no doubt about the rationality of a political revolution with a social soul."⁶⁴

Whether the revolution will usher in a new historical era by expanding its sociopolitical base and satisfying sociological aspirations is hard to say. It has not yet developed a concept of political economy to resolve the challenging problems which inhere in the capitalistic mode of accumulation. The country is still dependent on petrodollars. Moreover, with the emergence of a war economy, this dependency is further intensified. Nonetheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran does not have more than two options: either to choose dependent or independent development.⁶⁵ Economic dependence results, as has been empirically and historically proven, in political dependency and subordination. In fact, this was what was fought against and negated by the Iranian Revolution. To embrace it again would mean going from contradiction to contradiction. Therefore, it is imperative to choose both economic and political independence as social revolution, by its very radical nature, demands. But there is a gap between the revolution aiming at basic sociopolitical transformation and the incompatibility of the prevalent mode of thought which applies shackles to it.⁶⁶ That is why the promises of revolution still remain unfulfilled. If this contradiction is not resolved in favor of

complete national independence, the political rights and ideals of the forces of revolution, especially those of the destitute or downtrodden in whose name the revolution was fought, will not be realized. Yet eventually structural dependency can weaken existing structures providing a context in which a new outlook may open the possibility of genuine Iranian emancipation and democracy.⁶⁷

ENDNOTES

¹For a good criticism, see Theda Skocpol, "Explaining Revolutions: In Quest of a Social-Structural Approach," in The Use of Controversy in Sociology ed. Lewis A. Coser and Otto N. Larson, (New York: The Free Press, 1976), pp 155-175; see also idem, States and Social Revolutions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 3-42.

²Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 6.

³See Rod Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered: Contrasting Models of Collective Violence," Theory and Society 8(1979):39-99.

⁴See, for example, Lawrence Kaplan (ed.), Revolutions: A Comparative Study (New York: Random House, 1973). For further critical perspectives on functionalism, see Albert Szymanski, The Capitalist State and Politics of Class (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1978), pp. 9-11.

⁵See Andre Gunder Frank, "Functionalism and Dialectics" in Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution (New York: Monthly Review, 1969), pp. 95-106.

⁶Aya, "Theories of Revolution Reconsidered."

⁷Ibid; Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 14; Trotsky, The History of Russian Revolution. "Without a guiding organization the energy of the masses," says Trotsky, "would dissipate like steam not enclosed in a piston box. But, nevertheless, what moves things is not the piston or the box but the steam." See his Preface, p. xix.

⁸V.I. Lenin, What Is To Be Done? (New York: International Publishers, 1943), p. 41.

⁹Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 16.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 14.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 4-24.

¹²Ibid., p. 41. See also Albrecht Wellmer, Critical Theory of Society (New York: Continuum, 197), pp.121-139; see also pp.10-11.

¹³Harry Cleaver, Reading Capital Politically (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979).

¹⁴Douglas Kellner, "Human Nature and Capitalism in Adam Smith and Karl Marx," in The Subtle Anatomy of Capitalism ed. Jesse Schwartz (Santa Monica, Ca.: Goodyear Publishing, 1977), pp.66-85.

¹⁵C. Wright Milis, The Marxists (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 105-131. For a good criticism of Marxian class formulation, see James A. Bill, "Class Analysis and the Dialectics of Modernization in the Middle East," International Journal of Middle East Studies 3(1972):417-434; George V. Plekhanov, Fundamental Problems of Marxism (New York: International Publishers), pp. 62-66; Ali Shari'ati, Marxism and other Western Fallacies: An Islamic Critique (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980). For a non-Marxist perspective, see Muttahare Murtaza, 'Ilal-i giravish bih maddigari [The Reasons for Inclination to Materialism] (Qum: Sadra Publications, 1357).

¹⁶George Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness (London: Merlin Press, 1971).

¹⁷See Fred J. Carrier, The Third World Revolution (Amsterdam: B.R. Gruner B.V., 1976), pp. 343-354; Trent Schroyer, The Critique of Domination (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975).

¹⁸See H. Marcuse, "Reexamination of the Concept of Revolution," in NLR 56 (July-August 1969):27-34. George Novak, "The Uneven Development of the World Revolutionary Process," in Fifty years of World Revolution (1917-1967) ed. Ernst Mandel (New York: Merit Publishers, 1969), pp. 235-252; Nicos Poulantzas, "The Internationalization of Capitalist Relations and the Nation State," in Classes in Contemporary Capitalism (London: Verso, 1979), pp. 42-69. See also, Andre Gorz, Socialism and Revolution (New York: Anchor Press, 1973), pp. 1-10.

¹⁹Ernest Mandel, Trotsky, a Study in the Dynamic of His Thought (London: NLB, 1979), pp. 32-42. On this issue, see Thomas E. Weisskopf, "Imperialism and the Economic Development of the Third World," in The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment (ed.) Charles K. Wilber (New York: Random House, 1979), pp. 134-150.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 146-149.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²See Stephen Hymer, "The Internationalization of Capital", in Journal of Economic Issues 6, 1(1972):91-111; idem, "International Politics and

International Economics: A Radical Approach," in Stress and Contradictions in Modern Capitalism, ed. Leon N. Lindberg and Clause Offe, (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1975), pp. 355-372.

²³Ibid.; Thomas E. Weisskopf, see p. 148.

²⁴See Clive Y. Thomas, The Rise of the Authoritarian State in Peripheral Societies (New York: MRP, 1984), pp. 93-94.

²⁵James F. Petras (ed), Capitalist and Socialist Crises in the late Twentieth Century (New Jersey: Rowman & Allenheld), pp. 288-295 and 319-341; idem, "Toward a Theory of Twentieth Century Revolutions," Journal of Contemporary Asia 8 (1978):167-195; Herbert Marcuse, Counter Revolution and Revolt (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972); David Horowitz (ed), Radical Sociology: An Introduction (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 233-251. See also Saul Landau, "Understanding Revolution: A Guide for Critics," in Monthly Review v-i (May 1987):1-13.

²⁶David Horowitz, "Imperialism and Revolution," in Radical Sociology, ed. D. Horowitz, pp. 283-307; see also idem, Empire and Revolution: A Radical Interpretation of Contemporary History (New York: Vintage Books, 1969); Jurgen Habermas, Theory and Practice (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 197.

²⁷See Herbert Marcuse, "The Movement in a New Era of Repression: An Assessment," Berkeley Journal of Sociology 16 (1971-72):1-4. Harry Cleaver also holds that without revolution in the center, a free, peaceful world and emancipation of man cannot be fulfilled. (Personal discussion.)

²⁸The weakest link was wherever the power of the state could be broken down. This concept is formulated by Trotsky. See Leon Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution, Vol. I, p. 132.

²⁹Marcuse, "The Movement," pp. 3-4; see also idem, "Re-examination of the Concept of Revolution," New Left Review 56 (July-August 1969):27-34.

³⁰Marcuse, "The Movement."

³¹Carrier, The Third World Revolution, pp. 25-49.

³²On this particular argument, see Cornel West, Prophesy Deliverance: An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982).

³³Caution should be taken on this perception for anti-imperialism or opposition to imperial domination does not necessarily mean a radical and fundamental sociopolitical alteration or socioeconomic emancipation from capitalistic oppression. For an original and highly critical analysis on this subject, see Asnad-i Lanah-i Jasusi Amrika [Documents from the American Espionage Nest] Muslim students following the line of Imam (Tehran: Islamic Publication Bureau, N/D), pp. 188-189.

³⁴Fred Halliday, "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development and Religious Populism," Journal of International Affairs 36, 2 (Fall/Winter, 1982/83):186-207.

³⁵S. Irfani, Revolutionary Islam In Iran (London: Zed Books, 1983), pp. 85-86.

³⁶See Fred Halliday, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," in Third World Quarterly (October 1979):1-16.

³⁷Bizhan Jazani, Capitalism and Revolution in Iran (London: Zed Press, 1980), pp. 77-78. See also Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," in New Left Review 74 (July-August 1972):59-81.

³⁸Fred Halliday, Iran, Dictatorship and Development, pp. 59-63.

³⁹Ibid.; "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development and Religious Populism," in Journal of International Affairs 36, 2 (Fall-Winter 1982-1983):195-196.

⁴⁰The exports of Iranian non-oil goods were no more than 2 percent compared to India whose manufactured goods to be exported made up over 50 percent of its export gains. This figure for Mexico was 35 percent. This clearly proves the weakness and characteristically uneven development of the Iranian economy. See H. Katouzian, The Political Economy of Iran, 1926-1979, pp. 322-331. See also F. Halliday, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," pp. 7-8.

⁴¹Ibid; Halliday, "The Iranian Revolution,"; see also for general theoretical perspectives Michael Lowy, The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development: The Theory of Permanent Revolution (London: Verso, 1981), chap. 3.

⁴²F. Halliday, "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development," p. 204.

⁴³See Saul Landau, "Understanding Revolution: A Guide for Critics," p. 3.

⁴⁴Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks eds. Quintin, H. and G. Nowell-Smith (London: 1972), p. 276.

⁴⁵See, for example, Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," in New Left Review 114 (March-April 1984):96-113.

⁴⁶See Halliday, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," pp. 6-9.

⁴⁷V. H. Oppenheim, "Why Oil Prices Go Up, The Past: We Pushed Them," Foreign Policy 25 (Winter 1976-1977):24-57.

⁴⁸F. Halliday, "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development," pp. 193-195.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," pp. 6-9.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, "Iran: The Economic Contradictions," MERIP 8 (July-August 1978):16.

⁵²See Halliday, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," p. 10.

⁵³*Ibid.*, see p. 11. See also Assef Bayat, Workers and Revolution in Iran (London: Zed Books, 1987), pp. 59-65.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, Halliday, p. 11; Bayat, pp. 77-97.

⁵⁵For an insight on uneven and combined development see Ernst Mandel, Fifty Years of Revolution (New York: Merit Publishers, 1969), p. 240.

⁵⁶On an extensive analysis of contradictions, the readers can be referred to Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung, vol. I (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1977), pp. 311-346.

⁵⁷See Halliday, "The Iranian Revolution: Uneven Development and Religious Populism," pp. 182-191.

⁵⁸For a general detail, see James Petras, "Socialist Revolutions and Their Class Components," in New Left Review 111 (September-October 1978):37-

64. See also his article, "Toward a Theory of Twentieth Century Socialist Revolutions," in Journal of Contemporary Asia 8 (1978):167-195.

⁵⁹Skocpol, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution," Theory and Society 11 (1982):266.

⁶⁰Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 41.

⁶¹See A. Panah, "Reliance on Oil Exports is a Vulnerable Policy," Kayhan Havaei Mehr 7/10/1364=10/2/85, p. 14.

⁶²Cited by Carrier in The Third World Revolution, p. 344.

⁶³Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran (New York/London: New York University Press, 1981).

⁶⁴Karl Marx, marginal notes, "The King of Prussia and Social Reform," in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York/London: W. W. Norton, 1978), p. 132.

⁶⁵See Maxime Rodinson, Islam and Capitalism, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981, pp. 214-235. On this particular argument, see p. 215.

⁶⁶Mahmood Enayat, "Az Mast Ke Bar Mast" ["It is Our Fault"], Maktab 7 (July 1987). On this issue, Hojjat al Islam Khomeini's view is a perfect illustration. See pp. 8-10.

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